

Celiac Disease and Colon Cancer/Association or Anecdote

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Background: It has been universally accepted that celiac disease is a premalignant condition. The search of English literature revealed only one published report (3 cases) of right side adenocarcinoma of colon associated with coeliac disease. This prompted us to report a case of adenocarcinoma of the ileocecal region associated with coeliac disease.

Case Report: Patient is a 68 year old white female with past medical history of hypothyroidism, insulin dependent mellitus (IDDM), HTN, CAD, and left brain A-V malformation, presented to our institution with complaints of moderate diarrhea, nausea, anorexia and chest pain for two weeks duration. The physical examination was grossly normal. The laboratory data were as follows: cholesterol = 304 mg/dl; alk phos = 116i.u. LDH = 266 i.u. TFT/FT4 = 1.89 ng/dl; TSH 0.47i.u./ml; FT3 1.1 ng/ml. The CT Scan of the abdomen and pelvis was unremarkable. The patient underwent a colonoscopy examination, which revealed a large tumor in the ileo-cecal region. Biopsy reported as villotubular adenoma with moderate atypia. The upper endoscopy examination showed flattened folds in the small bowel. At this time, celiac disease was suspected. The biopsy was taken from small bowel, which reported subtotal villous atrophy and non-specific chronic inflammation. The antigliadin antibody was positive. The patient underwent exploratory laparotomy for the removal of ileocecal lesion. The histopathology report was consistent with adenocarcinoma of the colon, well differentiated. The tumor staging was T₁, N₀, M_x. the patient's diarrhea improved an gluten- free diet. The post-op course was uneventful.

Conclusion: The pathogenesis of malignancy in coeliac disease is not yet known. Currently, genetic mutations are considered as common denominator in the development of any neoplasia. As hereditary non polyposis colorectal cancer syndrome (HNPCC) have predilection to involve the right side of the colon, it is possible that cancer of colon in celiac disease and HNPCC have a common genetic basis.