



Concurrent Gastric and Colon Adenocarcinoma, a Rare Clinical Presentation

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Abstract

Synchronous (simultaneous) malignant lesions in different organs of a patient are very rare finding. Gastric and colon adenocarcinomas are the most common cancers worldwide but their synchronous occurrence is rare and only four percent of gastric cancer patients have simultaneous colon adenocarcinoma. Here, we report a 64-year-old woman with simultaneous gastric and colon adenocarcinoma presented by abdominal pain and hematemesis.

Keywords: Colon Cancer, Gastric Adenocarcinoma, Synchronous Malignancy

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Introduction

Synchronous (simultaneous) malignant lesions in different organs of a patient are very rare finding. As a definition, cancers are defined synchronous if two or more primary tumors occur in a same patient within six months (1). There are multiple reports of concurrent benign and malignant tumors in the literature. Gastric and colon adenocarcinomas are the most common cancers worldwide as separate tumors with high mortality and morbidity, but their synchronous occurrence is rare and only four percent of gastric cancer patients have simultaneous colon adenocarcinoma (2,3). Here, we report a 64-year-old woman with simultaneous gastric and colon adenocarcinoma presented by abdominal pain and hematemesis.

Case Report

A 64-year-old woman was referred to our gastroenterology clinic with recent history of abdominal and epigastric pain, abdominal distension, and recent constipation. The patient had the symptoms for few weeks and outpatient medications had not improved her symptoms. The patient was admitted for further investigations. During hospitalization, she had an episode of vomiting and hematemesis. So, upper gastrointestinal (GI) endoscopy was performed and revealed a large malignant ulcer at gastric lesser curvature measuring 5 cm in greatest diameter. Biopsies were obtained for pathologic evaluation. Additionally, considering patient's recent constipation and changes in bowel habits, colonoscopy was also performed which

revealed a large polypoid mass at descending colon. Tissue samples were also obtained.

Histopathological Evaluations:

Pathologic sections from the gastric biopsy specimen revealed malignant epithelial cells arranged in cellular sheets and also isolated signet ring cells within stroma, confirming the diagnosis of adenocarcinoma. Tissue samples from colon biopsy were also definitive

for adenocarcinoma. To confirm the primary or secondary nature of these tumors, immunohistochemistry (IHC) staining for CK7, CK20, CDX2, and AMACR were performed. IHC staining for gastric tumor was positive for CK7 (diffusely positive) and CDX2 but negative for CK20 and AMACR, which was definitive for the diagnosis of primary gastric adenocarcinoma (Figure 1).

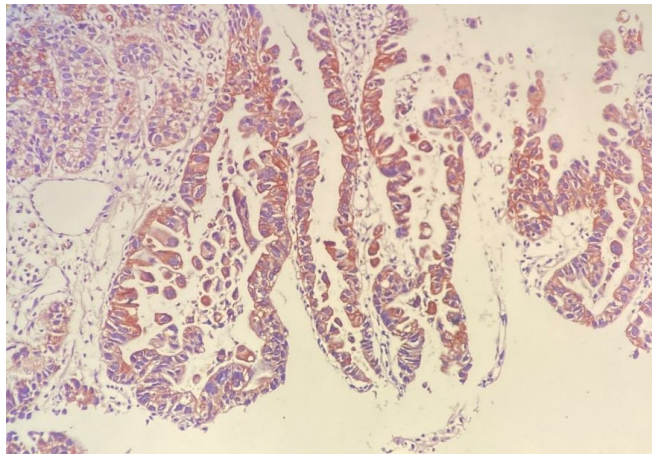


Fig. 1. Immunohistochemistry (IHC) staining for CK7 marker, showing strong positive staining in tumoral cells (IHC, 20x)

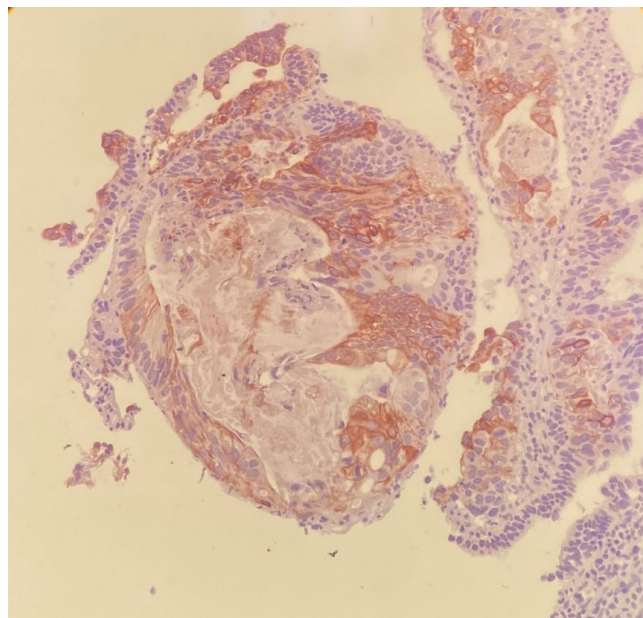


Fig. 2. Immunohistochemistry (IHC) staining for CK20 marker, showing strong positive staining in tumoral cells (IHC, 20x)

Additionally, IHC staining results for colon mass showed positive staining for CK20 (diffusely positive), CDX2 (focally positive), and AMACR, but negative for CK7 which confirmed the diagnosis of primary adenocarcinoma of colon origin (Figure 2).

Finally, considering morphologic and IHC findings, the patient was diagnosed with synchronous gastric and colon adenocarcinomas. The patient underwent thoracoabdominal computed tomography (CT) and bone scans for metastasis detection and the results were negative.

Conclusion

Concurrent malignancies are rare conditions. There are multiple reports of concurrent malignancies from different organs in the literature, which include carcinomas and sarcomas of lung, breast, prostate, etc. (4-7). In this paper, we reported a 64-year-old woman with synchronous gastric and colon adenocarcinomas. Although gastric and colon cancers are the most common malignancies in human (8), but their simultaneous occurrence is rare. According to literature, the incidence of concurrent gastric and colon carcinoma ranges from 0.8 to 4% (9). Since there are significant differences between treatment of colon and gastric cancers, detection of simultaneous malignancy in these two organs would be of therapeutic value.

Additionally, considering morphologic similarities of gastric and colon adenocarcinomas, further histologic evaluations such as implementation of differentiating histologic markers and IHC may be mandatory for definite diagnosis. Also, pathologists need to be aware of the patients' simultaneous malignancies to be able to make accurate diagnoses. Coexistence of malignancies in different organs can lead to both diagnostic and therapeutic challenges, and considering the nature and pathogenesis of cancer, this may raise multiple questions. Malignancies of different organs have different prognoses and in our case, colon adenocarcinoma has a more favorable prognosis than gastric adenocarcinoma (10), so choosing the correct and effective therapeutic plan would be challenging. Additionally, detection and diagnosis of a simultaneous

malignancy in another organ could be always difficult and a missed concurrent malignancy may have a great impact on patient prognosis and treatment outcome.

Our report is important from clinical point of view. As mentioned, presence of a synchronous tumor significantly changes therapeutic plans. Considering the high prevalence of these two malignancies, it is worthy to recommend performing screening colonoscopy in gastric cancer patients before performing surgery and also upper GI endoscopy in the patients with colon cancer before making therapeutic plans.

Acknowledgments

None declared.

Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest in this study.

Ethical statement

The patient provided written informed consent for anonymized information and images to be published in this article.

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