Sirenomelia—sympus unipus (mermaid deformity)

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A 29-year-old primigravida delivered a stillborn infant at 31 weeks' gestation. The patient had no prior US examination. The external features demonstrated fused lower limbs with a rudimentary single foot and no genitalia and anus (Fig. 1). A frontal radiograph shows partly fused femora, two nonfused tibia-fibula and a rudimentary calcaneus (Fig. 2). These features are consistent with sirenomelia, a rare and lethal congenital anomaly. The spectrum includes fusion of lower limbs, renal agenesis causing oligohydramnios, absent external genitalia, anorectal anomalies and a single umbilical artery. Sirenomelia is classified into three types according to the number of feet: sympus dipus, both feet present; sympus unipus, one foot present; sympus apus, no feet present [1]. The etiology suggested is abnormal persistence of vitelline artery causing vascular steal from abdominal aorta and lower extremity. Prenatal sonographic diagnosis remains difficult because of significant oligohydramnios. As amniotic fluid volume is unrelated to fetal production in the first trimester,

early second-trimester fetal survey is preferred, although first-trimester diagnosis is possible [2].

Fig. 2 Frontal radiograph

Fig. 1 Photograph shows stillborn

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