LETTER TO THE EDITOR

PRIMARY OMENTAL TORSION: RADIOLOGIC DIAGNOSIS IN A YOUNG WOMAN

To the Editor:

Torsion of the omentum is a rare disease that affects mainly young and middle-aged women (1). Since the clinical findings are not specific, knowledge of the characteristic computed tomography (CT) findings of omental torsion is essential for diagnosis and subsequent management.

A 38-year-old woman presented to the emergency room with a 3-day history of persistent and diffuse abdominal pain. The pain was not related to meals and increased upon the patient's trying to move the trunk. No intake of medications and no relevant medical or surgical history were reported. The physical examination was remarkable for diffuse abdominal tenderness and guarding. The complete blood count, electrolytes, liver function tests, amylase, and lipase were within normal limits. Urinalysis showed no abnormality. An urgent contrast-enhanced CT scan of the abdomen and pelvis showed diffuse streaking of the greater omentum extending downward and anteriorly below the umbilicus to reach the pelvis, with a focal mass of fat density showing streaks in a whirling pattern (Figure 1). A thin layer of free fluid surrounding the liver and a larger amount of peritoneal fluid in the pelvis were noted. The diagnosis of torsion of the omentum was suspected and confirmed at laparotomy. An excision of the omental mass (omentectomy) and appendectomy were performed. The patient made an unremarkable recovery.

The etiology of primary omental torsion is obscure, but several factors have been implicated in its pathogenesis. Predisposing factors include obesity and anatomical variations such as tongue-like projections, bifid or accessory omentum, and vascular abnormalities (2). Possible precipitating events include sudden change of position, overexertion, overeating, and abdominal trauma (1). Since the great majority of patients present with an acute abdomen,

Fig 1. Contrast-enhanced CT section of the abdomen demonstrating a focal mass (black arrows) of fat density with whirling streaks anterior to transverse colon.

a CT scan of the abdomen is the examination of choice (3). Characteristically, the presence of concentric linear strands is a clue to the diagnosis of omental torsion.

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