

Amyand's Hernia: The Greek experience

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Dear Editor,

We read with great interest, the case report entitled Amyand's Hernia in a 76-year-old Greek Male published in the 90th volume of the Hellenic Journal of Surgery (Zacharis *et al.* [1]). The authors presented the case and the therapeutic approach in a comprehensible manner, followed by a mini review of the literature. Despite the unfortunate lack of relevant images, we found the case report to provide the reader with the essential information about this compelling condition.

Claudius Amyand was a surgeon who practiced in England in the 18th century. He was born in Paris, but being a Huguenot, he fled to England where he lived most of his adult life. He served with the English army as a surgeon-in-ordinary and was later appointed Sergeant Surgeon, initially to King George I and subsequently to George II, earning numerous titles throughout his career. His extraordinary accomplishment was performing the first recorded successful appendectomy on an 11-year-old patient whose inflamed appendix was contained in the sac of an inguinal hernia. He conducted this surgical procedure in 1736, 130 years before the standard appendectomy procedure was described.

Although Amyand's hernia is considered to be a rare entity, its estimated incidence is reported as up to 1.7% [2]. Given that over 10,000 cases of inguinal hernia are operated on each year in Greece, the general surgeon should be aware of the underlying pathophysiology and management of Amyand's hernia. As far as the Greek experience is concerned, in addition to those cited in the publication under discussion, several other cases have been reported.

Specifically, Salemis and colleagues in 2006 [3] and Ballas and colleagues in 2009 [4] published case reports of Amyand's hernia in the Journal of Hernia and the Hippokratia Journal, respectively. The author of this letter published a similar case report in the Hellenic Journal of Surgery in 2008 [5]. The 2008 publication concerned a case of Amyand's hernia in a 49-year-old man, who was treated in the Amphissa General Hospital.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that the general surgeon should not consider Amyand's hernia to be an extremely rare entity, but as a possible finding during the routine investigation of a hernia. Thus, the surgeon should examine the contents of the hernial sac with care whenever possible, especially in the case of indirect inguinal hernia.

References

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