

CASE REPORT

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Pathological post-obstructive diuresis following obstructive uropathy due to constipation in the post-partum period: a case report

Mohamed Rishard^{1*} , Thalagala Kossinnage Maheeka Kossinna², Mohamed Nazar Latiff³, Susantha De Silva⁴ and Mohamed Hilmy Mohamed Asmath⁵

Abstract

Background: Constipation during pregnancy is not uncommon. Usually, this does not warrant extensive evaluation and settles with minor interventions or lifestyle modifications. Severe fecal impaction in chronically constipated patients can rarely lead to obstructive uropathy. Relief of obstruction can result in a diuretic phase which may be self-limiting or pathological. However, occurrence of pathological post-obstructive diuresis as a result of severe constipation is an extremely rare complication during pregnancy and puerperium which can even be fatal if not promptly diagnosed and adequately monitored and timely intervened. We describe the management of a pathological post-obstructive diuresis which occurred in the immediate postpartum period after treatment of severe constipation and obstructive uropathy.

Case presentation: A woman who had undergone an emergency caesarean section due to deep transverse arrest 1 week ago, presented with fecal impaction and anuria. On relief of urinary obstruction which had developed secondary to fecal impaction, she developed pathological post-obstructive diuresis. Careful and timely monitoring with exact fluid replacement, correction of electrolyte imbalances and multidisciplinary care ensured complete recovery of the patient.

Conclusions: Despite obstructive uropathy being uncommon in obstetric practice, clinicians need to have a high index of suspicion to monitor and promptly manage the potentially life-threatening condition of post-obstructive diuresis in pregnant and puerperal women undergoing urinary tract decompression. Due to unreliability of laboratory cutoff values in pregnancy and puerperium, a more vigilant and multidisciplinary approach with lower threshold for intervention is more prudent in the management of these patients.

Keywords: Constipation, Post-obstructive diuresis, Obstructive uropathy, Post-partum morbidity, Fecal impaction

Background

The terms postnatal period and postpartum period are interchangeably used to refer to the first 6 weeks (42 days) following childbirth and is further subdivided as immediate (first 24 h), early (day 2 – day 7) and late (day 8 – day 42) phases of the postpartum period [1]. During this time, physiological changes of pregnancy are slowly

*Correspondence: rishi7875@yahoo.com

¹ Department of obstetrics and gynecology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Full list of author information is available at the end of the article



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