Case Report

Fetal Supradiaphragmatic Accessory Liver Lobe

Report of a Case and Review of the Literature

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Summary. A right thoracic accessory liver lobe with a normal diaphragm is reported in a stillborn fetus. A review of the literature reveals seven cases affecting adult patients.

Key words: Liver — Accessory lobe — Supradiaphragmatic — Fetus.

Introduction

Ectopic liver lobes are infrequent malformations, almost all of them being described in the abdominal cavity (Cullen, 1925; Willis, 1958). Thoracic heterotopic liver tissue without diaphragmatic malformation is a real curiosity. In the available literature there are only seven well documented human cases, all of them affecting adults. This paper reports the finding of a supradiaphragmatic accessory liver lobe in a stillborn fetus.

Case Report

A twenty-five year old white pregnant female with a history of two previous spontaneous abortions (1973, 1974) presented in August 1975 at our Hospital. Her last normal menstrual period was on June 23, 1975. No history of exposure to any known teratogens, viral agents or drugs was elicited. After the first consultation, observation continued at the Obstetric Out-Patient Department every fifteen days. At the 22nd week of pregnancy the physical examination revealed no leg edema, the blood pressure was 120/65 mm Hg, the uterus measured 18 cm and the fetal heart rate was normal. She had no proteinuria and blood glucose was 95 mg/dl. On Dec 25th she was hospitalized with a 12 h history of spontaneous rupture of the membranes, the fetal heart was not heard. Twenty-four hours later delivery of a dead fetus occurred following an oxytocin infusion.

Necropsy Findings

A white male fetus, placenta and membranes were received for pathological study. The weight of the fetus was 630 g, its measurements were as follows: crown-heel length, 290 mm; crown-rump

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Fig. 1. Fetal visceral block showing the right lung and the abdominal liver. Among these organs and lying over the diaphragmatic fragments, there is a triangular, lateral mass corresponding to the accessory thoracic liver lobe.

Fig. 2. Histological section of the hepatic accessory lobe with its joining pedicle entering the normal diaphragm. Some vessels cross the peduncle and disappear among the muscle bundles. A cross section of the falciform ligament showing some vessels is seen near the ending of the accessory pedicle. (H and E stain, × 9)