

Laparoscopic approach in gallbladder agenesis – an intraoperative surprise

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Abstract

Introduction: The congenital absence of the gallbladder in the absence of biliary atresia is extremely rare, world literature recognizing only 413 cases. The aim of this study is to clarify the diagnostic and therapeutic approach of this rare condition.

Method: There were retrospectively analyzed the first 2 cases of gallbladder agenesis admitted and surgically approached in the Emergency Hospital, Bucharest.

Results: The first case (woman, 23 years old) had typically biliary complaints at admission, shrunken gallbladder and lithiasis on ultrasound. There was a laparoscopic approach but we didn't find any gallbladder. After a non-therapeutic laparoscopy the biliary symptoms disappeared. In the second case (woman, 52 years old) the admission was for upper abdominal quadrant colicative pain and the transparietal abdominal ultrasound showed chronic cholecystitis. Common bile duct dilatation was revealed during laparoscopy. After conversion to laparotomy there was performed intraoperative colangiography, but no other biliary pathology was revealed. The initial complaints also disappeared after surgery.

Conclusions: We find the laparoscopic approach an effective method for the diagnosis of gallbladder agenesis. Postoperative Magnetic Resonance Cholangiopancreatography represents a very useful imagistic tool to rule out an intrahepatic gallbladder.

Key words: agenesis, gallbladder, laparoscopy

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