Image of the Month - Mucinus Adenocarcinoma of the Rectum in an Adolescent

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Clinical Image
A 15-year-old boy was admitted with a history of diarrhea, rectal bleeding and melena for the last week. His previous history was unremarkable although an unintentional weight loss of 15 kg was reported during the last months. On admission, the patient was pale, but hemodynamically stable. His clinical examination was unremarkable with a moderate sensitivity on palpation of the hypogastrium. Laboratory investigation revealed iron deficiency anemia and moderate elevation of CRP & ESR.

In colonoscopy, a severe stenosis of the lumen was observed at ~20 cm from the anus. Rectal mucosa below the stenosis, was whitish, as occurs after chemical trauma, with multiple ulcerations, pseudopolyps, friability and spontaneous bleeding (Figure 1). The rectal biopsies revealed a mucinous adenocarcinoma (Figure 2).

Figure 1: multiple ulcerations, pseudopolyps, friability and spontaneous bleeding
Colorectal carcinoma comprises approximately 1% of pediatric neoplasms and it is the most common primary gastrointestinal malignancy in children [1,2]. The presenting symptoms are non-specific and diagnosis is usually delayed with an extremely poor prognosis compared with adults [3].

Mucinous colorectal adenocarcinoma is characterized by the presence of abundant extracellular mucin for at least 50% of the tumor volume and occurs more commonly in female and younger patients [4,5]. The patient was transferred to the oncolgic department for further assessment and treatment.

References


