

## BILIARY ASCARIASIS

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### ABSTRACT

Roundworm is a common problem in Bangladesh, but biliary ascariasis is a rare phenomenon. Recently we found two cases of acute epigastric pain and roundworms were seen in the gallbladder on ultrasonographic examinations.

**Key words :** Ascariasis, acute abdomen, pregnancy, ultrasonography.

### INTRODUCTION

*Ascaris lumbricoides* was first discovered by Ligneous in 1758. The detailed life-cycle of the ascaris, however, was not known until 1916. One quarter of the world's population is infected with ascariasis.<sup>1</sup> In a recent survey, the prevalence of *Ascaris lumbricoides* in 58.28 % among the school-children in Dhaka<sup>2</sup> and 41.12 % in Gangachara (Rangpur).<sup>3</sup> Clinical manifestations may result from the migration of larvae through the lungs and from the presence of adult worms in the small intestine, hepatobiliary system and pancreatic ducts. The adult worms may measure upto 45 cm in length.

### CASE REPORT (1)

A medical student of 5<sup>th</sup> year MBBS (wife of a physician), primigravida, about 35 weeks of gestation, presented with acute epigastric pain on 19-5-98. She had loose motions on 17-5-98 and was taking oral rehydrations saline. Ultrasonography showed a male fetus of about 35 weeks (cephalic presentation) and serpiginiuous movenent of a live roundworm in the maternal gallbladder. However, abdominal pain subsided in a few hours. The patient gave a history of taking anthelmintic drug albendazole 400 mg single dose six months ago. She was improved by mebendazole and

cephalexin this time.

### CASE REPORT (2)

A man aged 45 years presented with acute upper abdominal pain which was subsided by hyoscine-N butylbromide and ranitidine, however, Ultrasonography revealed a dead roundworm inside the gallbladder. The patient told that he had taken mebendazole 400 mg one year ago. He was advised to take mebedazole again and repeat ultrasonography after 1 week.

### DISCUSSION

Sonography is a rapid noninvasive way of imaging which shows the ascariasis in the biliary tree as a bull's eye on transverse section, as a long echogenic shadow in longitudinal section or as coils or amorphous fragments.<sup>4-9</sup> Pancreatic duct ascariasis has been described, although less commonly.<sup>10-11</sup> The worms may show characteristic sinuous movements, thus helping to confirm the diagnosis<sup>12</sup> as also in our present case. Peck reported a case of ultrasound imaging of intestinal ascaris.<sup>13</sup> Khan and Ali reported 19 cases of hepatobiliary ascariasis among 24697 persons (about 0.08%) during a ten years period in a mixed

population from North-West Frontier province of Pakistan and Afghan refugees.<sup>14</sup> Khan of Bangladesh reported 4 cases of biliary ascariasis, all confirmed on surgery.<sup>15</sup>

Our case no. 1 is the first report of sonography of biliary ascariasis in pregnancy as far as the author knows from the available literature.

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