Successful treatment of cervical esophageal obstruction using combined antegrade and retrograde dilation with an endoscopic ultrasound needle and fully covered stent

While complete esophageal obstruction is a technically challenging problem, the combined antegrade and retrograde dilation (CARD) procedure provides an endoscopic treatment option for these obstructions [1–3], and the addition of an endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) needle increases the speed and convenience of the procedure [4–5]. Here we describe use of this technique for the successful treatment of a long cervical esophageal occlusion by using flexible endoscopes and a fully covered removable stent.

A 61-year-old man presented to another institution with complete esophageal obstruction, 8 months after treatment for a T2N2B tonsillar squamous cell carcinoma. He required a gastrostomy tube for nutrition and was unable to swallow his own secretions. A conventional CARD procedure was attempted but unsuccessful due to the size of the obstruction.

Subsequently, the patient self-referred to our center for the CARD–EUS needle procedure. A 6-mm upper endoscope (GIF-XP160; Olympus, Hamburg, Germany) was introduced through the gastrostomy and advanced retrograde to the distal aspect of the occlusion, which was located in the cervical esophagus (● Fig. 1a).

A 9-mm flexible upper endoscope (GIF-Q180; Olympus) was advanced perorally to the proximal aspect of the stricture where C-arm fluoroscopy in the anteroposterior and lateral positions was used to align the endoscopes (● Fig. 1b). A 19-gauge EUS needle was advanced antegrade through the fibrotic obstruction under fluoroscopic guidance until it was visualized by the retrograde scope (● Fig. 1c). A 19-gauge hydrophilic 0.035-inch guide wire was then used to pass a 6-Fr biliary dilation catheter. Wire-guided balloon dilators were used to dilate the stricture to 11 mm at three stations with good effect (● Fig. 1d, e). A 7-cm × 18-mm fully covered removable stent was placed, taking care to open the proximal aspect of the occlusion without introducing the stent into the oropharynx, which proved difficult (● Fig. 1f). The duration of the procedure was 80 minutes.

The stent was removed at 9 weeks, whereupon the patient was taught to perform periodic self-dilation with a Maloney rigid esophageal dilator, with good results.

Endoscopy_UCTN_Code_TTT_1AO_2AH

Competing interests: None

B. B. Ancrile, A. Mathew, M. T. Moyer
Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania, USA
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Bibliography

Endoscopy 2011; 43: E51–E52
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Corresponding author
B. B. Ancrile, PhD
Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
500 University Drive
PO Box 850, Mail Code HU33
Hershey
Pennsylvania 17033-0850
USA
Fax: +1-717-531-6770
bancrile@hmc.psu.edu