Inflammatory myofibroblastic tumor (IMT) is a mesenchymal tumor that occurs preferentially in children and young adults. IMTs were initially considered as a result of a reactive inflammatory or post surgery process [1]. However, they are thought to have low-grade malignant potential, based on the recent molecular finding of rearrangement at chromosome band 2p23, the site of the anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK) gene in the tyrosine kinase locus [2]. They are most commonly found in the lung but may arise in extrapulmonary sites [3].

A 42-year-old woman presented with intermittent dull epigastric pain since 1 month and tarry stool passage since 1 week. The laboratory findings were unremarkable except for a normocytic anemia (hemoglobin 7.7 g/dL). Upper endoscopy revealed a broad-based, protruding mass of approximately 5.5 cm in size, located in the anterior wall of lower gastric body. The tumor was accompanied by bridging folds and two deep ulcerations on the surface (Fig. 1).

Abdominal computed tomography (CT) demonstrated a strongly enhancing mass, approximately 5.5 cm in size, with surface ulceration, arising from the submucosal layer of the anterior wall of the lower gastric body (Fig. 2).

Microscopic section showing the tumor composed of spindle cells with massive, predominantly inflammatory, infiltration of plasma cells (hematoxylin and eosin, magnification × 40) (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1 a,b Upper endoscopy showing a broad-based, protruding mass, approximately 5.5 cm in size, in the anterior wall of lower gastric body. The tumor is accompanied by bridging folds and two deep ulcerations on the surface.

Fig. 2 Abdominal computed tomography (CT) scan demonstrating a strongly enhancing mass, approximately 5.5 cm in size, with surface ulceration, arising from the submucosal layer of the anterior wall of the lower gastric body.

Fig. 3 Microscopic section showing the tumor composed of spindle cells with massive, predominantly inflammatory, infiltration of plasma cells (hematoxylin and eosin, magnification × 40).

Inflammatory myofibroblastic tumor: an unusual submucosal lesion of the stomach

Gastric IMT is very rare and may be confused with other submucosal lesions, especially GIST, and IHC studies are the only conclusive diagnostic modality [4]. When investigating a gastric submucosal lesion, IMT should be taken into consideration particularly if the patient is young or the pathology shows massive plasma cell infiltration admixed with spindle cells.

Competing interests: None

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