Endoscopic ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration (EUS-FNA) is a useful and safe procedure for obtaining tissue samples for the diagnosis of lesions adjacent to the gastrointestinal tract [1, 2]. We describe a first case of hemobilia presenting as obstructive jaundice after EUS-FNA for hilar cholangiocarcinoma.

For obtaining tissue samples, we performed EUS-FNA on the hilar bile duct tumor from the duodenal bulb by using a 22-gauge needle (Echotip-Ultra; Wilson-Cook, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA). The pathological specimen revealed adenocarcinoma, and the patient was diagnosed with hilar cholangiocarcinoma. After 4 days, he complained of abdominal pain and icterus. A laboratory test revealed a serum bilirubin level of 6.6 mg/dL. Abdominal computed tomography (CT) showed that high-density fluid was retained in the gallbladder and common bile duct (Fig. 2).

We suspected obstructive jaundice caused by hemobilia. A duodenoscope showed that blood was flowing out from the papilla (Fig. 3).

We placed a 5-Fr endoscopic nasobiliary drainage (ENBD) tube for biliary drainage. Hemobilia subsided following conservative therapy, and the ENBD tube was removed after 8 days.

Hemobilia is a rare complication after percutaneous liver biopsy [3]. The accidental laceration of an artery or a portal vein is considered to be the likely cause of hemobilia. Although EUS-FNA of bile duct tumors has been reported frequently [4], there were no reports of hemobilia as a complication of EUS-FNA. In our patient, hemobilia occurred 4 days after EUS-FNA, which was within the previously reported range in which hemobilia developed after liver biopsy [3]. Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) can successfully visualize blood coming out from the papilla. Although, in our case, hemobilia resolved with ENBD tube insertion, transarterial embolization or surgery may be sometimes necessary for its management [5].

Competition interests: None

Department of Gastroenterology, Graduate School of Medicine, The University of Tokyo, Japan
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Corresponding author
K. Kawakubo, MD
Department of Gastroenterology
Graduate School of Medicine
The University of Tokyo
7-3-1 Hongo Bunkyo-ku
Tokyo
113-8655
Japan
Fax: +81-3-38140021
kkawakubo-gi@umin.ac.jp

Fig. 2 Abdominal computed tomography (CT) showing high-density fluid in: a the gallbladder (arrow) and b the lower bile duct (arrow).

Fig. 3 Endoscopic image showing blood coming out from the papilla.