Successful endoscopic treatment using biological fibrin glue (Tissucol) for an enterocutaneous fistula occurring after cephalic duodenopancreatectomy

An enterocutaneous fistula is an abnormal communication between the small or large bowel and the skin, which leads to external drainage of intestinal contents. It is an important issue in surgical practice, as most cases occur secondary to surgical complications and cause significant morbidity owing to septic complications and may require surgical intervention, with variable levels of success [1,2]. Postoperative fistulas account for 75%–85% of all enterocutaneous fistulas. One-third of fistulas close spontaneously; the remainder require surgical intervention, with variable levels of success [1,2]. Recently a few cases of endoscopic treatment with biological fibrin glue resulting in a good outcome have been reported [3–5]. We present the case of a 61-year-old man who had undergone cephalic duodenopancreatectomy and postoperatively developed an enterocutaneous fistula, which was confirmed by a barium enema. Conservative treatment was started with parenteral nutrition and somatostatin analogues, which led to reduction in the leakage but not to complete resolution. The patient would not accept more surgical intervention, and we therefore opted to treat him endoscopically with biological fibrin glue (Tissucol Duo; Baxter).

A colonoscopy was performed, during which a guidewire was introduced through the fistula and visualized in the transverse colon (Fig. 1 a). Initially we attempted to close the defect with the over-the-scope clip (OTSC) system (Ovesco, Tübingen, Germany); however, because of the existence of fibrosis around the orifice, this was not successful. We therefore proceeded to debride the orifice and to seal the fistula with Tissucol immediately after the procedure; complete closure of the colocutaneous fistula a year after the procedure.

Endoscopy_UCTN_Code_TTT_1AQ_2AG

Competing interests: None

Ángeles Araujo-Míguez, Salvador Sobrino-Rodriguez, Ansel David Avila-Carpio, Juan Manuel Bozada-García, Teófilo López-Ruiz, Juan Caballero-García, José Luis Márquez-Galán

Digestive CMU, Virgen del Rocío University Hospitals, Seville, Spain

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Endoscopy 2015; 47: E191
© Georg Thieme Verlag KG
Stuttgart · New York
ISSN 0013-726X

Corresponding author
Ángeles Araujo-Míguez, MD
Digestive CMU, Virgen del Rocío University Hospitals
C/ Manuel Siurot s/n
Seville 41013
Spain
Fax: +34-95-5012439
angaramig@gmail.com

Araujo-Míguez Ángeles et al. Tissucol treatment of an enterocutaneous fistula... Endoscopy 2015; 47: E191