

The role of capsule endoscopy in the detection of small bowel disease

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Abstract

Videocapsule endoscopy (VCE) can identify lesions in the small bowel which would otherwise be hard to detect. We have selected 53 patients with digestive symptoms in which upper and lower endoscopy had provided no findings. Patients were classified into three groups, based on their main indication for VCE exploration: group one - obscure gastrointestinal bleeding (OGIB); group two - unspecific abdominal symptoms; group 3 - monitoring of a prior known pathology. We found that VCE has high predictive values, sensibility and specificity in the diagnosis of OGIB. VCE was also useful in the detection and extent evaluation of lesions in Crohn's and celiac disease. VCE is also able to detect tumors of the small bowel with sufficient accuracy, and can be used to monitor patients with hereditary pre-malignant diseases such as FAP. There were few light adverse effects and no major complications. We conclude that VCE is a safe and effective procedure for the detection of small bowel lesions.

Key words: videocapsule endoscopy, obscure gastrointestinal bleeding, Crohn's disease, celiac disease, small bowel tumors

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