

Emergency Surgery for Small Bowel Hemangioma. A review of the literature

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Abstract

Background: Hemangiomas of the small intestine are tumors rarely found in practice. Patients usually present in emergency settings with anemia, gastrointestinal bleeding or abdominal pain. The purpose of this review of the literature is to evaluate the diagnostic modalities, therapeutic options and their results in cases of intestinal hemangiomas.

Methods: This is a review of the recent literature concerning intestinal hemangioma with bleeding in the last five years including one case from our institution. Search criteria were defined using MeSH terms. The descriptive analysis was performed accordingly.

Results: In the last five years there was a total of 24 cases ours being the 25th with a predominance of male patients (20 cases). Literature search found a low threshold for preoperative diagnostic (only in 28% of the cases). More than half of the tumors were in the ileum. Surgery is the main therapeutic option (in 88% of the cases). Nonsurgical treatment (endoscopic or radiological) can rarely be employed successfully.

Conclusions: Surgery is the main treatment for larger hemangiomas while for smaller ones nonsurgical treatment methods are available.

Key words: hemangioma, bleeding, surgery, small bowel