
THE CLINICAL PRESENTATION OF INTUSSUSCEPTION IN CHILDREN ATTENDING THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AT KING HUSSEIN MEDICAL CENTER

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Summary

This is retrospective study of 103 patients who attended the Emergency Department (ED) at King Hussein Medical Center (KHMC), Amman – Jordan, during the period from 1993-1999. Data was obtained from their files regarding the clinical presentation. The mean age was 13 months with a range of 1 month to 11 years. There were 69 males and 34 females. The main symptom was abdominal pain (49 patients), vomiting (34 patients), abdominal mass (15 patients) while 29 patients presented with shock or dehydration. History of a preceding illness was recorded in 16 patients; of which diarrhoea was the commonest. The latter symptom should alert the clinician regarding the diagnosis which, if made early in the course of the disease, would reduce morbidity.

Introduction

Intussusception is one of the commonest causes of abdominal emergency in young children. The aim of study is to determine the frequency, signs and symptoms of Intussusception.

The mortality has been reduced in recent years and refinement of the non-surgical methods of treatment has reduced the number of cases requiring surgical reduction^{1-2,6-7} however a significant morbidity and mortality exist².

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Patients and Methods

In this retrospective study 103 patients with intussusception presented to ED at KHMC between the periods 1993-1999 were reviewed. Data was obtained from their files regarding to demographical features and clinical presentation.

Results

A total of 103 patients with Intussusception were identified with mean age of 13 months with the range of 1 month to 11 years. Out of them were 69 males and 34 females. The presenting signs and symptoms are shown in table I

and II. The main symptom was abdominal pain in 49 patients, vomiting in 34, a mass was found in 15 patients and in 29 patients presented in shock or dehydration.

Table I. frequency of symptoms

Symptoms	No. of patients	%
Pain	49	47.6
Vomiting	34	33
Diarrhea	8	7.7
Non-specific illness	7	6.7
Bloody stool	2	2
Apnea	1	1
No symptoms	2	2
Total	103	100

Preceding illness were found in 16(15.4) patients. These are listed in Table II. The majority of children 87 patients did not have any preceding illness.

Table II.

Preceding	No.	%
Upper Respiratory tract infection	9	8.7
Gastroenteritis	2	1.9
Urinary tract infection	1	1
Pyrexia	4	3.8
Total	16	100

Discussion

Intussusception is the commonest cause of acute abdominal presentation in ED in early childhood. In UK between one and two infants in every thousand have intussusception¹.

The sex ratio is 2:1 male to female similar to most studies². The range of age was fairly narrow, 95% of patients were below the age of 3 years and 75% below 1 year unlike studies from Africa³ and Holland⁴.

Conclusion

The most common presenting symptom is vomiting following shortly by abdominal pain^{5,6} diarrhea was the common symptom but we could not properly determine whether it was infective or due to intussusception itself so increased awareness of various presentation and doing the necessary investigations at an early stages reduces the surgical morbidity.

References

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