

## **Introduction:**

Intussusception, a condition where one intestinal segment telescopes into another, is a significant cause of intestinal obstruction in pediatrics populations, particularly among infants and toddlers. Trans-anal protrusion of intussusception (TAPI) is a rare but notable complication of intussusception. This atypical presentation can be easily misdiagnosed as rectal prolapse.

## **Case description:**

A 2-year-old Malay boy presented with a bleeding rectal mass, abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea for two days. Clinically, he appeared lethargic and pale with signs of hypovolemic shock. There was a vague mass in the lower abdomen and a dark, tender mass protruding from the anus. Laboratory tests revealed leucocytosis and metabolic acidosis. The abdominal and chest x-rays were not inconclusive, showing no dilated bowels or perforation.

Initially he was diagnosed as prolapsed thrombosed rectum and started with fluid resuscitation, antibiotics and analgesia. A warm saline-soaked gauze dressing applied over the prolapsed rectum. An urgent ultrasound confirmed a long segment intussusception. A trial of manual reduction was unsuccessful and prompting emergency laparotomy, manual reduction and appendectomy. Post-operatively, the child was monitored in Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and discharged well on day 6 with outpatient follow up.

## **Discussion:**

Intussusception, the telescoping of one intestinal segment into another, is the most common abdominal emergency in children under two. In Malaysia, it predominantly affects Malay male infants under one year old. The ileo-colic type accounts for 90% of cases. TAPI is a rare but critical variant which can mimic rectal prolapse, complicating diagnosis.



Figure 1: a substantial, dark blue-black mass protruding from the anal region

Ultrasound is the preferred diagnostic tool, with high sensitivity and specificity, showing the classic 'target sign'. Management differs greatly, in which rectal prolapse is treated conservatively, while TAPI is a surgical emergency requiring prompt intervention.

## **Conclusion:**

An accurate and early differentiation between TAPI and rectal prolapse is crucial to ensure a timely and appropriate management.

## **References:**

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