

Ogilvie's syndrome following an emergency caesarean section: A case report.

K. Ravi¹, M. Kumar², K. Balachander³ - ^{1,2 & 3} Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology,
Gosford District Hospital, NSW.

Background

Ogilvie's syndrome, also known as acute colonic pseudo-obstruction, is a rare complication after caesarean section of which the cause is unknown. It is characterized by dilation of the colon without a mechanical obstruction and commonly presents as intestinal obstruction. The incidence can be 1 in 1000 in hospitalised patients with mortality for uncomplicated cases of around 15%.

Aim

Emphasis for early recognition of Ogilvie's syndrome in patients after caesarean section with significant abdominal distension.

Case

A 37-year-old female (gravida 2, para 2) received an emergency caesarean section at term after presenting in labour with rupture of membrane and a history of one previous caesarean. Her past medical history was significant for iron deficiency anaemia with no other history. She had an intraoperative 2L postpartum haemorrhage secondary to atony and required blood transfusion. On post-op day two, she developed severe abdominal distension and pain. She neither opened her bowel nor passed flatus.

On examination she had a fever with normal vitals. There was significant abdominal distension, generalised tenderness without signs of peritonitis and had hypoactive bowel sounds. Her haemoglobin was 81, electrolytes and white cells were normal.

Results

Abdominal radiograph followed by a contrast enhanced CT scan of abdomen identified a caecum measuring over 11cm without features of intestinal perforation. She underwent an emergency colonoscopic decompression without any complications and was discharged two days later. She recovered well two weeks post-surgery.

Discussion

Ogilvie's syndrome should be recognised early in patients with abdominal distension and pain following caesarean section given high rate of morbidity and mortality.



Abdominal radiograph



CECT Abdomen

References

[Ogilvie Syndrome – Stat Pearls - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Postpartum Acute Colonic Pseudo-Obstruction \(Ogilvie's Syndrome\): A systematic review of case reports and case series - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Acute colonic pseudo-obstruction after caesarean section: a review and recommended management algorithm - Hughes - 2019 - The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist - Wiley Online Library](#)