Peritoneal Metastasis with Tumor Bleeding: Ususual Initial Presentation of Hepatocellular Carcinoma

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BACKGROUND AND AIMS: Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) with tumor rupture, hemoperitoneum as the initial clinical presentation was often noted in the emergency room. But HCC with peritoneal metastasis and bleeding was rare, and this could be the unusual initial presentation of HCC.

METHODS: One 68 female came to our emergency room due to left upper abdominal pain for two days. Physical examination showed tenderness in left upper abdomen with general weakness. Abdominal CT scan revealed one 5 cm heterogenous density lesion in left upper abdomen with close contact of spleen. Abnormal high density ascites in the perisplenic area, pelvis region and adjacent to tumor lesion could be noted in precontrast CT scan. Tumor rupture with hemoperitoneum was impressed. There were also several tumors in both lobe of liver. HCC was suspected, But the exact tumor nature could not be well defined due to lack of dynamic study. Under the impression of tumor rupture (may be from HCC with metastasis, primary spleen or peritoneal tumor) with hemoperitoneum, emergent operation with excision of intra-abdominal tumor and splenectomy was performed.

RESULTS: Operation findings showed one 9x8x7 cm friable mass in splenic flexure with spleen involvement and bleeding. Pathological findings showed metastatic HCC without spleen involvement.

CONCLUSION: HCC has a tendency to spontaneous rupture and the majority of HCC rupture occur in the liver. Extrahepatic metastasis of HCC are not rare. But peritoneal metastasis and bleeding as the initial presentation of HCC is very rare and this unusual presentation may lead us to have another differential diagnosis in image before operation.