

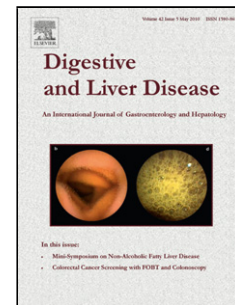
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Image of the month

## **Agensis of the retro-hepatic inferior vena cava**

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We recently observed in the pre-operative work-up of a gallbladder adenocarcinoma the agensis of retro-hepatic inferior vena cava (IVC) associated to an accessory right and left hepatic artery (Fig.1). The patient was a 77 year-old lady with no relevant past medical history, operated in another hospital by laparoscopic cholecystectomy. The specimen pathology report showed a gallbladder adenocarcinoma classed pT2Nx. Then she was referred to our center for further treatment. The pre-operative CT scan showed the agensis of retro-hepatic IVC, the hepatic veins draining directly in the right atrium (Fig.2). The azygos vein was hypertrophied and drained all the venous circulation of the inferior part of the body. The patient had never undergone any abdominal imaging before. Bisegmentectomy IV-V was performed by laparotomy, the pathology report showed no residual tumor in the liver parenchyma. Agensis of the inferior vena cava is a very rare finding with an estimated incidence of 0.0005% to 1% in the general population [1]. IVC develops between the sixth and eighth weeks of gestation and in adult life is composed by four segments (infrarenal, renal, suprarenal and retro-hepatic) derived from the three pairs of primitive veins, the postcardinal, subcardinal, and supracardinal vein. Anomalies of retro-hepatic IVC can have surgical implication in hepatic surgery and liver transplantation, and though very rare they should be always searched in pre-operative imaging.

Conflict-of-interest statement: All the authors declare that they have no competing interests.

[1] Sneed D, Hamdallah I, Sardi A. Absence of the retrohepatic inferior vena cava: what the surgeon should know. *Am Surg* 2005;71:502-4.

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