

Endourology

Robot-Assisted Laparoscopic Management of Caliceal Diverticular Calculi



Anneleen Verbrugghe^{a,*}, Loïc Gaillandre^b, Damien Mouton^a, Franck Deschildre^b,
Philippe Koenig^a, Charles Ballereau^a, Pierre Colin^a

^a Hôpital privé La Louvière, Ramsay GDS, 69 rue de la Louvière, 59000 Lille, France

^b Centre Libéral d'Imagerie de l'Agglomération Lilloise (CLIMAL), 26 rue du Ballon, 5900 Lille, France

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ABSTRACT

Standard treatment modalities of caliceal diverticular calculi range from extracorporeal shockwave lithotripsy (SWL) over retrograde intrarenal surgery (RIRS), percutaneous nephrolithotomy (PNL) and laparoscopic stone removal. A 55-year-old woman presented with a history of pyelonephritis based on a caliceal diverticular calculus. Due to the narrow infundibulum and anterior location, a robot-assisted laparoscopic calicotomy with extraction of the calculi and fulguration of the diverticulum was performed, with no specific perioperative problems and good stone-free results. This article shows technical feasibility with minimal morbidity of robot-assisted laparoscopic stone removal and obliteration of a caliceal diverticulum.

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Introduction

Caliceal diverticula are rare non-secretory urothelium-lined cavities that become symptomatic when associated with a calculus or infection. Diagnosis is generally confirmed with contrast enhanced CT scan, showing the localization of the stone and giving information on the anatomy of the caliceal diverticulum and its connection with the collecting system.

Several therapeutic options for the management of symptomatic caliceal diverticular calculi are available, varying from SWL over RIRS, PNL and laparoscopic stone extraction. With the introduction of the robotic system, this minimal invasive treatment can be added in selected cases.

Case presentation

A 55-year-old woman presented with recurrent abdominal pain and a history of pyelonephritis. In her medical history, we withhold appendectomy and hypertension. Laboratory investigation revealed a normal kidney function with absence of infectious parameters.

Radiologic investigation showed the presence of an anterior located caliceal diverticulum at the lower pole, with presence of a calculus of 13 mm (Fig. 1). Retrograde ureterography showed a very narrow infundibulum. Flexible ureteroscopy was performed with impossibility to access or open the diverticular neck, despite the use of methylene blue, injected retrograde in an attempt to identify the ostium of the diverticulum.

In a conjoint decision with the patient, we decided to perform a robot-assisted calicotomy with fulguration of the diverticulum and stone retrieval. Preoperatively a CT guided puncture of the calyx was performed, leaving a harpoon to facilitate diverticulum localization (Fig. 2). After retrograde placement of a double J stent, the patient was placed in left lateral decubitus and a pneumoperitoneum was established. The optic trocar was placed pararectal to the right, additionally two robotic trocars were placed, one subcostal and one distally in the right lower quadrant.

After incision on the white line of Toldt and medial mobilization of the colon, the fascia of Gerota was incised, using the harpoon as a repair (Fig. 3). The renal parenchyma covering the lower pole calyx was incised and the diverticulum was opened, with retrieval of the caliceal stones in a laparoscopic bag. The urothelial mucosa of the calyx was fulgurated using monopolar scissors and the kidney parenchyma was closed using a continuous suture monocril 0 (Fig. 3). The procedure was finalized with placement of a drain, closure of the fascia of Gerota, retraction of the endobag and closure

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* Corresponding author. Hôpital privé La Louvière, rue de la Louvière 69, 59042 Lille, France.

E-mail address: verbruggheanneleen@gmail.com (A. Verbrugghe).

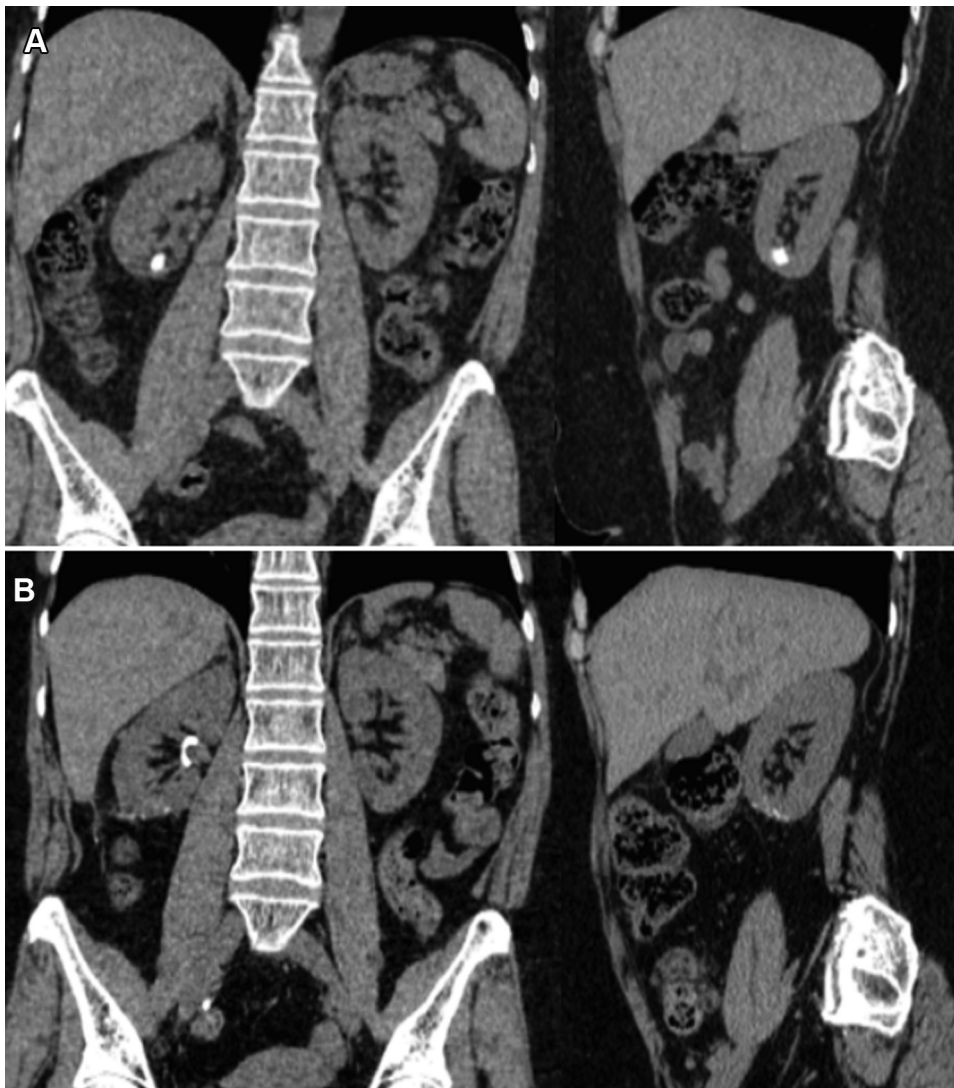


Figure 1. CT image of the anteriorly located calyceal diverticular calculus before (A) and after (B) treatment.

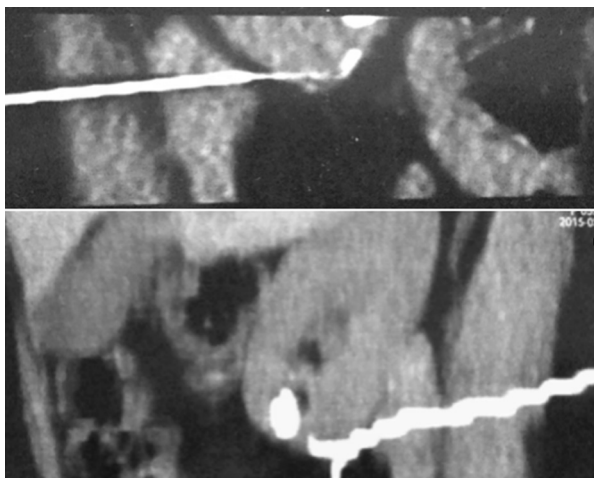


Figure 2. CT guided placement of harpoon.

of the wounds. The operative time was 120 minutes with an estimated blood loss of 50 mL.

No specific postoperative problems were encountered and the patient was discharged at day 2. Postoperative imaging showed absence of calculi and till now (6 months postoperatively) the patient hasn't had any pain or infectious episodes.

Discussion

The vast majority of patients with calyceal diverticula are asymptomatic, however operative intervention is needed in case of chronic pain or recurrent urinary tract infection. There's no consensus on the optimal treatment paradigm in patients with calyceal diverticula. Treatment modality should be selected according to patient related factors as diverticulum localization, diverticular neck anatomy, stone burden and patients preference.

SWL can provide symptomatic pain relief in 36–70% of patients, but stone-free rates are low, ranging from 4–20%.¹ Passage of the fragments is often prohibited by the same abnormality that caused urinary stasis and stone formation in the first place: a long and

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