

Blunt splenic injury during colonoscopy: Is it as rare as we think?

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Background: Post colonoscopy blunt splenic injury (PCBSI) is a rarely reported and poorly recognized event. We analyzed cases of PCBSI managed at our hospital and compared them to existing literature.

Methods: We identified 5 patients admitted with PCBSI through chart review.

Results: There were 5 cases of PCBSI identified from April 2016 – July 2017. Four of the patients were older than 65 years, three had prior surgeries, and all were women. CT scans showed splenic laceration in 4 cases, hemoperitoneum in 4 cases, and left pleural effusion in 2 cases. Three patients were treated with coil embolization, 1 had open splenectomy, and 1 was observed.

Conclusions: Although blunt splenic injury is an infrequently reported complication of colonoscopy, it can result in high-grade injury requiring transfusion and invasive treatment due to significant hemorrhage. As previously reported, we demonstrate a high rate of PCBSI in women over 55 with a history of prior abdominal surgery. These data suggest that a high index of suspicion for splenic injury post-colonoscopy should be present in this population.

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