

## Hepatocellular Carcinoma Presenting as Huge Splenic Mass

### Dear Editor,

Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) is one of the relatively aggressive neoplasms. Although extrahepatic metastasis of HCC to various organs is frequently discerned, metastasis to the spleen is extremely rare. To date, only scattered case reports have been illustrated.<sup>1-3</sup> We report 1 case with hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) negative and HCV-antibody negative who initially presented with huge splenic mass caused by HCC.

A 52-year-old man without history of alcohol consumption presented with poor appetite, belching and left upper quadrant pain for 3 months. His abdominal computed tomographic (CT) scan revealed a big heterogeneous mass in the spleen and no definite hepatic tumour (Fig. 1). An increased level of alpha-fetoprotein was noted (14,400 ng/mL). HBsAg and HCV-antibody were negative. The patient underwent splenectomy and liver wedge biopsy. The removed spleen, weighing 1100 g and measuring 17 x 13 x 10 cm in size, contained a yellow-white, irregular border mass that occupied about 70% to 80% of the spleen. Pathologic findings disclosed HCC of liver with splenic metastasis and diaphragm metastasis. This patient died of hepatic encephalopathy 1 year after surgery.

In Imada and colleagues' autopsy study, the prevalence of splenic metastasis from various cancers is 5.3%.<sup>4</sup> Stomach, colon, lung and ovary are the frequent primary organs.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, extrahepatic metastasis of HCC to various organs is frequently detected. However, only 0.8% to 1% of patients with HCC had splenic metastasis.<sup>4,5</sup> Clinical presentation of splenic metastasis from HCC is variable. The patients may present with asymptomatic, enlarged cervical lymph nodes, abdominal fullness/pain, left upper quadrant mass or intraperitoneal haemorrhage due to splenic rupture.<sup>1-3</sup>

Splenic metastasis from HCC is quite rare. This particular case emphasises consideration of this condition as a differential diagnosis in splenic space-occupying lesion.

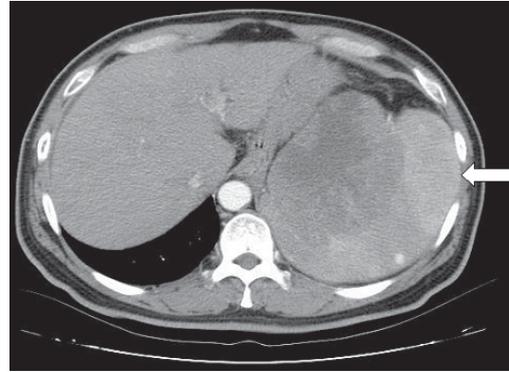


Fig. 1. Abdominal computed tomographic scan revealed a big heterogeneous mass in the spleen (arrow).

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