

Huge gastric trichobezoar in school-aged girl: A Case Report

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Received date: 28 March 2023; **Accepted date:** 23 April 2023; **Published date:** 29 April 2023

Citation: Jidane S, Belgassi K, Belkouch A, Zidouh, S, Belyamani L (2023) Huge gastric trichobezoar in school-aged girl: A Case Report. J Med Case Rep Case Series 4(06): <https://doi.org/10.38207/JMCRCS/2023/APR04060235>

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Introduction

Hair pulling (trichotillomania) and hair eating (trichophagia) are the most common causes of trichobezoar conditions. Because of its smooth surface, human hair is resistant to digestion and peristalsis and can become trapped in the lumen. As a result, hair collects in the mucosal folds of the stomach. The swallowing of hair, mucous, and food continuously can cause impaction, creating a trichobezoar [1].

Keywords: Trichobezoar - School-aged girl - Gastric - Abdominal mass

Case observation

We report a case of a 15-year-old girl who presented initially to a private clinic at Kenitra City in the north-west of Morocco, brought by her family for an epigastric mass accidentally discovered by her mother, with a history of decreased appetite, weight loss, and transit disorder during the last few months. At her examination, the girl was asthenic and pale. Abdominal palpation revealed a hardened, well-defined mass measuring about 24 x 12 cm, non-painful. The rest of the physical examination was regular.

Given her father's work, the girl was transferred to the Military Hospital in Rabat, where an abdominal computed tomography found a heterogeneous dense mass occupying the whole stomach up to the pylorus (**Figure 1**). The biological assessment performed did not show any disorders except the hypochromic microcytic anemia at 10 g.dl-1, with no signs of infection or organ failure. No electrical abnormalities founded in her EKG.



Figure 1: post-operative large trichobezoar measured 26.6 x 13.2 cm, with a long tail of hair.

Subsequently, surgical intervention was planned through a midline laparotomy with gastrotomy on the anterior portion of the gastric body. A large trichobezoar was discovered within the stomach with a putrefied smell, extending from the fundus to the proximal

duodenum, and was successfully removed in one piece. It measured 26.6 x 13.2 cm, with a long tail of hair witch length was 21 cm (**Figure 2**).

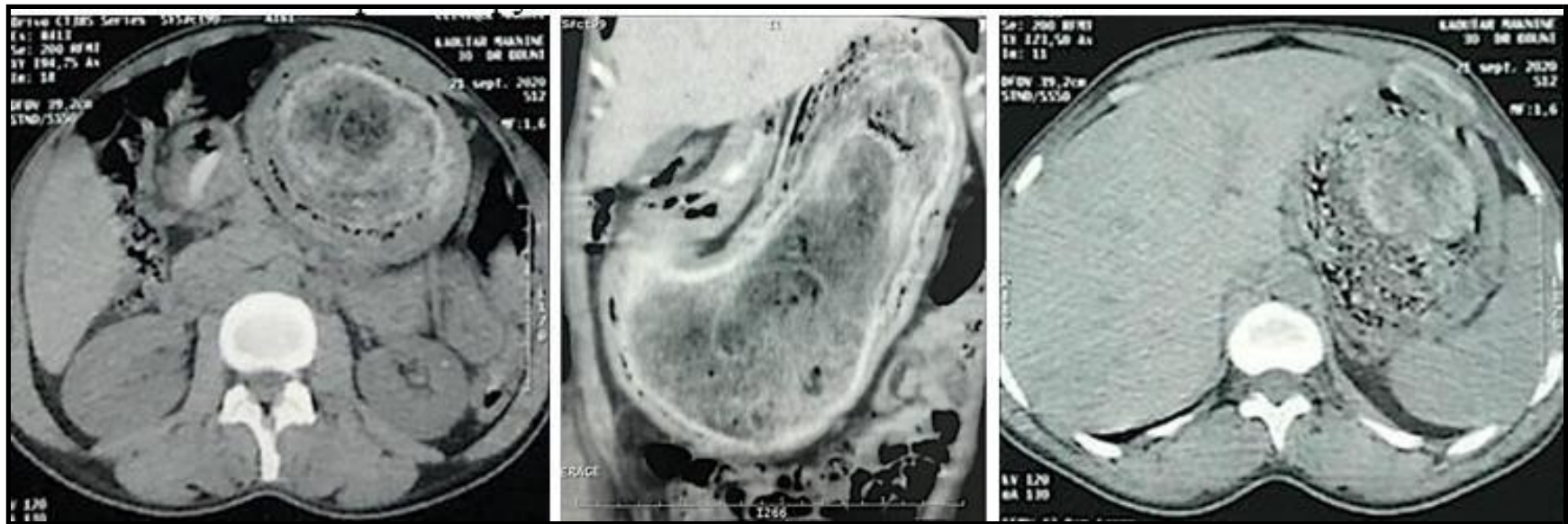


Figure 2 : abdominal computed tomography showed an heterogeneous dense mass occupying the whole stomach up to the pylorus

During the postoperative recovery phase, the patient and her family were questioned about the cause of the trichobezoar. The mother reported involuntary nocturnal trichotillomania, but no notion of trichophagia was evoked. She said she forbade her from doing that again without any oversight or psychological follow-up. The patient associated this behavior with school repression by her classmates and teachers since childhood.

Conclusion

Trichobezoar mainly affects young women with psychiatric antecedents who suffer from trichotillomania or trichophagia. It is a rare pathological entity that can seriously compromise the affected person's integrity, quality of life, functional capacity, and energy [2].

Patient consent: This report does not contain any personal information that could lead to the identification of the patient.

References

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The postoperative follow-up was uneventful, and the patient was discharged from the hospital on the seventh day after surgery and referred to the psychiatrist for psychological support. Follow-up for a medical control at six months was satisfactory and showed a marked improvement in weight, mental health, and in her school relationships.

The diagnosis of such pathology in this part of the population is crucial. Psychiatric care constitutes the cornerstone of medical care to avoid later recurrences.

Funding: No funding declared.

Conflict of interest: No conflict of interest was declared.

2. López-Álvarez LM, Moreno-Castellanos MA, Álvarez-Acuña AM, Echeverri-Mejía C, Narvaez-Rojas A, et al. (2022) Huge gastric trichobezoar caused by involuntary nocturnal trichophagia and trichotillomania in a female adolescent. *International Journal of Surgery Case Reports*. 99: 107627.