Mechanical Obstruction of the Small Bowel by a Dried Persimmon, Misdiagnosed as Intussusception

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Fig. 1. Abdominal computed tomography showed dilated small bowel and lesion looking like intussusception (arrows).

Fig. 2. Foreign body proved to be a dried persimmon. Resected small bowel showed ischemic necrosis of mucosa and muscle and congestion and hemorrhage of submucosa pathologically.

A 67-year-old woman was admitted to the emergency department because of abdominal distention and abdominal pain. The patient first presented to a local hospital because of abdominal pain that started two days prior and was transferred to the emergency department with suspected intussusception. Besides receiving hypertension medication, the patient had no remarkable history of past diseases or abdominal surgeries. Her blood test results were as follows: hemoglobin, 13.8 g/dl; white blood cell count, 7,720/mm³; platelet count, 188,000/mm³; sodium level, 138 mEq/L; potassium level, 3.0 mEq/L; and lactic acid level, 8.0 mg/dl. Abdominal computed tomography revealed distension of the proximal small intestine and intussusception (Fig. 1). Emergency laparotomy was performed, and a 4×8 cm mass was discovered in the small intestine 200 cm proximal from the ileocecal valve. The small intestine proximal from the mass was distended, while the distal small intestine beyond the mass was unremarkable. Obstruction of the small bowel by tumor or intussusception was suspected, and a segmental resection of the small intestine was performed. Inspection of the resected portion of the small intestine

showed a 4×8 cm mass. The mass was dark brown and firm. The mass was surrounded by a thin layer of serosa. The mass was composed of dried persimmon. The mass was removed, and the small intestine was resected. The resected portion of the small intestine was sent to the pathology department for histological examination. The pathology report showed ischemic necrosis of mucosa and muscle and congestion and hemorrhage of submucosa pathologically.

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revealed a foreign body suspected to be dried persimmon. Reevaluation of the patient's history revealed that the patient had previously swallowed dried persimmon without proper mastication due to tooth problems (Fig. 2). Dried food such as dried persimmon can cause obstruction by absorbing moisture in the small intestine and distending if swallowed whole. As abdominal pain caused by dried food swallowing can be misdiagnosed as small intestinal tumor or intussusception, caution is required [1-3].

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Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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