

Clinicopathological Feature of Adult Small Bowel Intussusception Diagnosed and Managed by Double-Balloon Enteroscopy : A Single Centre Study

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Research article

Keywords: Adult small bowel Intussusception, Balloon-assisted enteroscopy, low-grade small bowel obstruction

Posted Date: November 18th, 2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-110279/v1>

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Abstract

Background: Adult small bowel intussusception usually has an aetiology that leads to small bowel obstruction. Here, we aimed to identify the clinicopathological features of adult small bowel intussusception managed with Balloon-Assisted Enteroscopy (BAE) and to explore the clinical usefulness of BAE for the management of small bowel intussusception.

Method: We retrospectively analysed the clinical data of 13 patients who were diagnosed with adult small bowel intussusception at Korea University Guro Hospital between 2010 and 2019.

Results: The type of intussusception was ileoileal in eight (61.5%) patients and jejunal-jejunal in five (38.5%) patients. Eight cases of small bowel intussusception (61.5%; five idiopathic causes, two Peutz-Jeghers polyps, and one Crohn's disease) were successfully managed with BAE. The remaining five patients underwent laparoscopic small bowel resection due to management of the primary aetiology (two diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, one lipomatosis, one Peutz-Jeghers polyps, and one angiomyolipoma).

Conclusions: In many cases, adult small bowel intussusception had a benign and idiopathic aetiology. The diagnosis and treatment of adult small bowel intussusception with BAE may reduce the requirement for small bowel resection in selected patients.

Background

Adult small bowel intussusception (ASI) is a relatively rare condition, with surgical resection usually performed for management or prevention of obstructive symptoms. Unlike intussusception in children, ASI has over 70% lead point lesions [1–4].

It is controversial whether preoperative reduction of intussusception should be performed. If intestinal strangulation or bowel necrosis occurs, emergent surgical resection is required. However, if low-grade obstruction is suspected a scheduled operation is preferred. Preoperative reduction of obstruction can prevent short bowel syndrome by minimising the length of small bowel resection [5–7].

With the introduction of balloon-assisted enteroscopy (BAE), the entire small bowel can be visually identified, which has led to the progression of research using BAE. BAE allows for examination of the entire small bowel, improving the ability to identify any bleeding, strictures, or small bowel tumours. It can also be used for a variety of therapeutic interventions, including haemostasis, endoscopic mucosal resection (EMR), balloon dilatation, and stent insertion.[8–10]

In this study, we evaluated the usefulness of BAE in the diagnosis and management of ASI by analysing the clinicopathological characteristics of 13 patients with systemic reviews.

Methods

Patients

Between January 2009 and May 2019, 13 patients with small bowel intussusception underwent BAE at Korea University Guro Hospital. We retrospectively analysed their medical records, abdominal pelvic computed tomography (APCT) and BAE findings, and pathological results. This study was approved by the ethics committee of Korea University Guro Hospital.

BAE procedures

BAE was performed using an EN-450T5 (Fujinon Toshiba ES Systems, Tokyo, Japan). Based on the abdominal CT findings, the BAE insertion route was selected. The BAE procedures were predominantly performed for tissue confirmation or therapeutic intervention, including EMR by a single endoscopist (BJL). For an oral approach, BAE was performed after overnight fasting. For an anal approach, the small bowel was carefully cleansed with a polyethylene glycol solution. All patients were sedated with intravenous midazolam and propofol under careful cardiopulmonary monitoring.

Results

Baseline characteristics of patients

Thirteen patients underwent BAE for the identification of the aetiology of ASI during the enrolment period. All patients were diagnosed with ASI using abdominal CT then underwent BAE. The majority (10, 77%) of patients diagnosed with ASI were male, and the median age at the time of diagnosis was 41.7 years (range, 19–75 years). The majority of patients (11 patients) complained of abdominal pain, one patient reported haematochezia, and abnormal abdominal CT findings were seen in one patient. (Table 1) The lead point was located in the ileum in 8 (61.5%) patients and jejunum in 5 (38.5%) patients.

Table 1. Baseline characteristics of enrolled patients

Patient No.	Sex group	Age range	Chief complaint	Body mass index	Medical history
1	2	15~20	Hematochezia	21	-
2	1	65~70	Recurrent abdominal pain	14	Advanced gastric cancer
3	1	45~50	Abdominal pain	21	DM
4	1	25~30	Obstructive symptoms	27.1	-
5	1	20~25	Abdominal pain	17.6	-
6	1	40~45	Abdominal pain	24.4	-
7	1	35~40	Abdominal pain	27.2	-
8	1	45~50	Abdominal pain	24.5	-
9	1	50~55	Abdominal pain	24.9	Acute myeloid leukimia
10	2	45~50	Abdominal pain	23	-
11	1	25~30	Abdominal pain	18.3	-
12	1	75~80	Abdominal pain	28.5	DM
13	2	35~40	Abnormal image	18.1	-

DM : diabetes mellitus.

Diagnosis and BAE procedure

The insertion route was selected based on the abdominal CT findings. Antegrade, retrograde, and bidirectional approaches were used in six (46%) patients, six (46%) patients, and one (8%) patient, respectively. The mean procedure time was 65 min (range, 20–140 min). No major complications, such as bowel perforation, occurred during or after the study.[11, 12] Transient non-symptomatic elevation of serum amylase level was observed in seven patients who underwent the anterograde approach, but this normalised after 2 or 3 days (Table 2).

Table 2. DBE route, procedure time, etiology characteristics, and treatment modality

Patient No.	Approach	Time	Location, type	Final histology	Treatment modality
1	Oral	83 m	Ileoileal	(-)	None
2	Anal	105 m	Jejunojejunal	(-)	None
3	Anal	61 m	Ileoileal	(-)	None
4	Oral	40 m	Ileoileal	(-)	None
5	Oral	80 m	Jejunojejunal	Peutz–Jeghers polyp	small bowel resection
6	Oral	45 m	Jejunojejunal	Peutz–Jeghers polyp	EMR
7	Oral	140 m	Ileoileal	Peutz–Jeghers polyp	EMR
	Anal	40 m			
8	Anal	52 m	Ileoileal	DLBCL	small bowel resection
9	Anal	35m	Ileoileal	DLBCL	small bowel resection
10	Oral	90 m	Jejunojejunal	Lipomatosis	small bowel resection
11	Anal	20 m	Ileoileal	Chron’s disease	None
12	Anal	50 m	Ileoileal	Angiolipoma	small bowel resection
13	Oral	70 m	Jejunojejunal	(-)	None

DLBCL: diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, EMR: endoscopic mucosal resection.

Management and clinical outcomes of small bowel intussusception

Laparoscopic small bowel resection was performed in five (38.5%) patients, of which two had malignant aetiologies such as diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) and three patients had benign aetiologies such as lipomatosis, angiolipoma, and Peutz-Jeghers syndrome (Fig. 1, 2). The remaining eight patients (61.5%) attained a reduction in intussusception without surgical resection. Two patients with Peutz-Jeghers syndrome underwent resection with EMR via an antegrade or bidirectional approach. Follow-up abdominal CT revealed no signs of intussusception. In five patients with idiopathic aetiology, we

examined the entire small bowel using the antegrade or retrograde approach and found no intraluminal pathologies. After the BAE procedure, resolved intussusception was confirmed by abdominal CT. The remaining one patient has a benign (Crohn's disease) aetiology. After the BAE procedure, resolved intussusception was confirmed by abdominal CT. Table 1 summarises the characteristics of all patients with ASI.

Discussion

ASI is not as common as paediatric intussusception. The exact mechanism of intussusception remains unknown. However, invagination is thought to occur when the bowel wall becomes irritable because of changes in the lumen and normal peristaltic activity [5]. Unlike most paediatric intussusceptions, most ASIs have aetiologies that cause intestinal lumen obstruction. Thus, diagnostic or therapeutic interventions for tissue confirmation are usually required.

VCE and BAE are widely used for the diagnosis and treatment of small bowel lesions [10, 13–16], including low-grade obstructive lesions. BAE allows for real-time examination of the whole small bowel, enabling the identification and diagnosis of variable small lesions, including bleeding lesions, strictures, and tumours.[17] Our clinical study included 13 patients who were preoperatively diagnosed with ASI using APCT and BAE. Although it included only a small number of cases, our study enrolled the most number of cases using BAE compared with other studies thus far.

In previous studies, the most common cause of ASI was benign (61, 50%) followed by malignant lesions (26, 28%). Idiopathic causes accounted for approximately 22% of the cases. Meckel's diverticulum was the most common benign cause (12, 20%), followed by postoperative intussusception (10, 16%). Metastatic cancer (8, 31%) was the most common malignant cause, followed by adenocarcinoma (4, 15%). The results of the previous studies are summarised in Table 3.[2, 18–25]

In our study, the causes of ASI were benign, idiopathic, and malignant in seven (54%), five (38%), and one (8%) patients, respectively. Compared with the proportion of cases with idiopathic causes in previous studies, the proportion in our study was much higher. Surgical resection was performed in only five patients (38.5%), indicating that surgical resection could be avoided in the majority of patients with ASI using the BAE procedure. Peutz-Jeghers syndrome is a therapeutic indication for endoscopic management with BAE. In the past, laparotomy bowel resection was mostly performed to prevent ASI caused by the recurrence of Peutz-Jeghers polyposis (PJP). With the development of BAE, EMR has substituted surgical resection for the management of PJP[26, 27]. In our study, three patients had Peutz-Jeghers syndrome, of which two were treated with polypectomy or EMR without surgical treatment. The remaining patient was first treated with BAE; however, as many polyps were not approachable with BAE, small bowel resection and intraoperative polypectomy were performed.

The symptoms of ASI vary. Subacute or chronic abdominal pain is the most common symptom, followed by bowel obstruction symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, constipation, and abdominal distention. For high-grade obstruction of the small bowel with strangulation, surgical treatment should be the first

treatment of choice. In our study, 11 (85%) patients complained of abdominal pain, including obstructive symptoms. All patients had low-grade obstruction without strangulation.

BAE in low-grade small bowel obstruction has the advantage of enabling histological confirmation of the aetiology and avoidance of surgical treatment. The BAE procedure requires repetitive bowel folding and shortening by using an overtube with a balloon; hence, it can lead to bowel reduction. But this presented study has a limitation in that it included only a small number of cases.

Conclusion

In conclusion, BAE is a useful diagnostic and therapeutic modality for ASI without strangulation and can be safely performed. Diagnosis and reduction using preoperative BAE have the advantage of avoiding surgical small bowel resection in over 50% of patients.

Abbreviations

VCE: Video Capsule Endoscopy

ASI: Adult Small bowel Intussusception

BAE : Balloon-Assisted Enteroscopy

DLBCL : Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma

EMR : Endoscopic Mucosal Resection

APCT : Abdominal Pelvic Computed Tomography

PJP : Peutz-Jeghers Polyposis

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

The Ethics Committee of the Korea University Guro hospital approved the protocol (2019GR0002), and the study was carried out following the ethical guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki.

Consent for publication

Not applicable

Availability of data and material

The datasets analyzed during the current study are not publicly available because they contain sensitive patient information, but may available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Funding

None

Author Contributions

Conceptualization: BJL .

Formal analysis: WSK, AYA, SMK

Project administration: BJL

Case provide: JJP, HJK, MKJ, SHK

Supervision: BJL

Visualization: LBJ, MKJ, JJP

Writing – original draft: WSK, BJL

All authors have read and approved the manuscript

Acknowledgments

Not applicable

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Figures

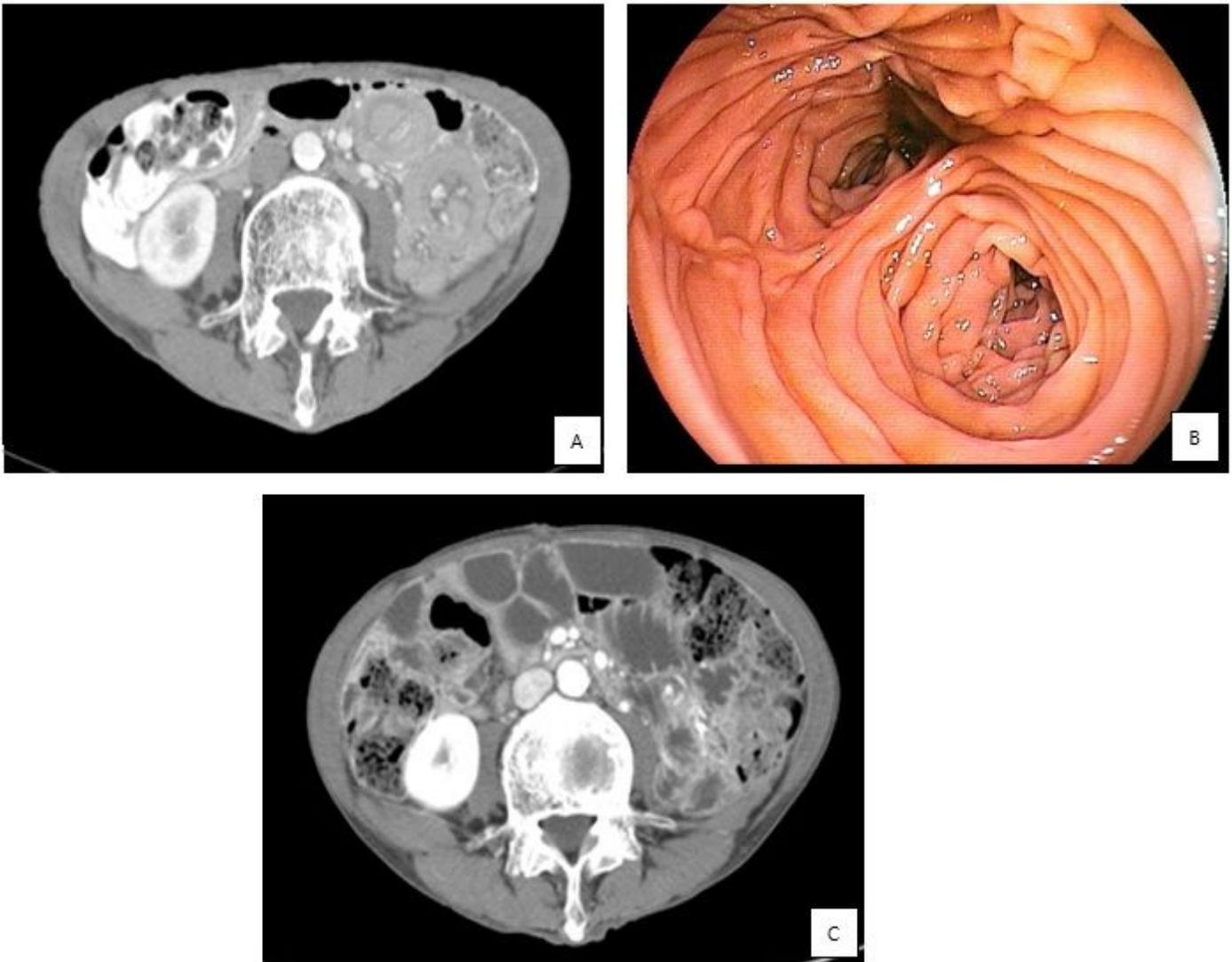


Figure 1

(A) Abdominal computed tomography (CT) showing the target lesion with alternating densities (B) DBE finding (C) Abd CT findings after DBE procedure

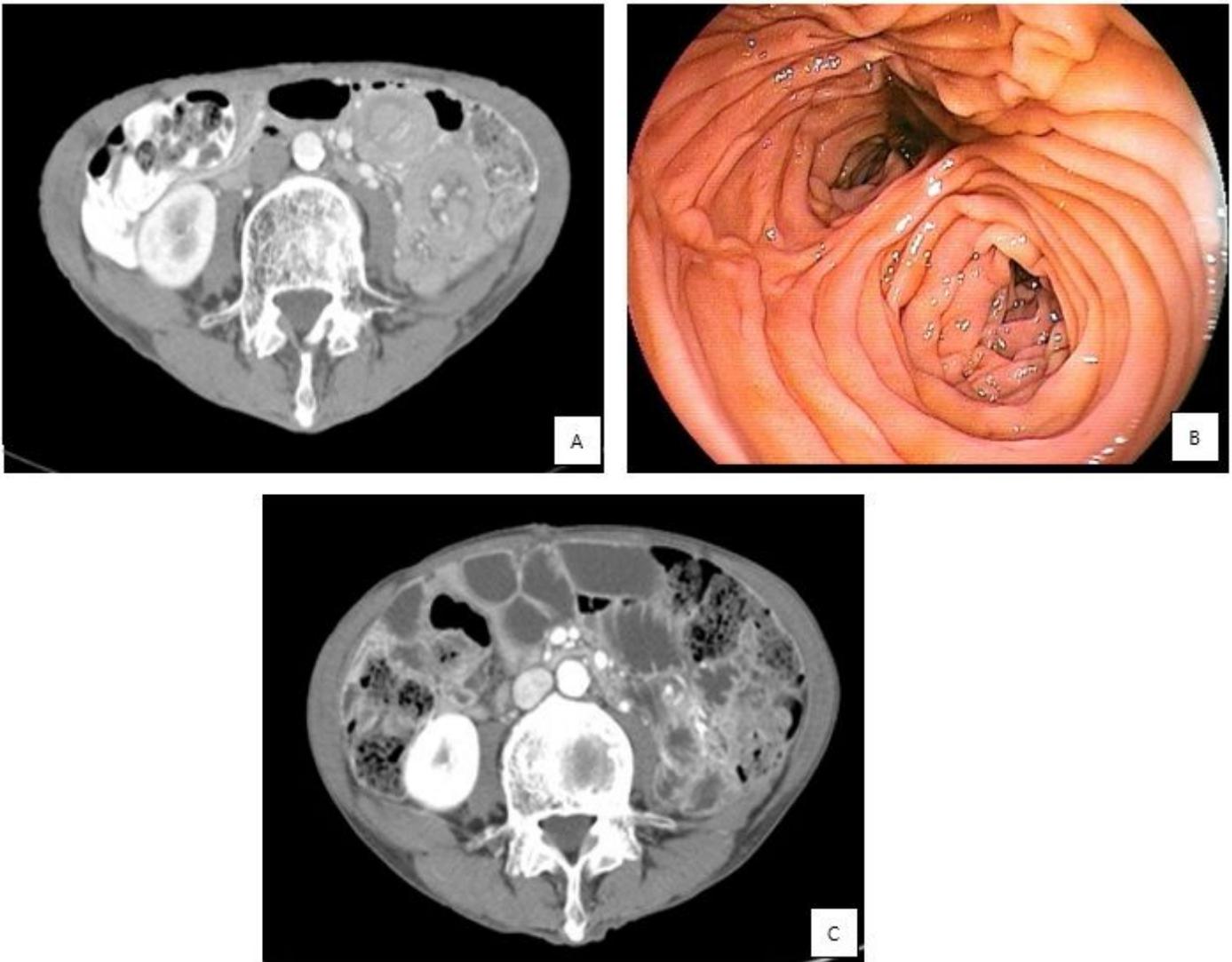


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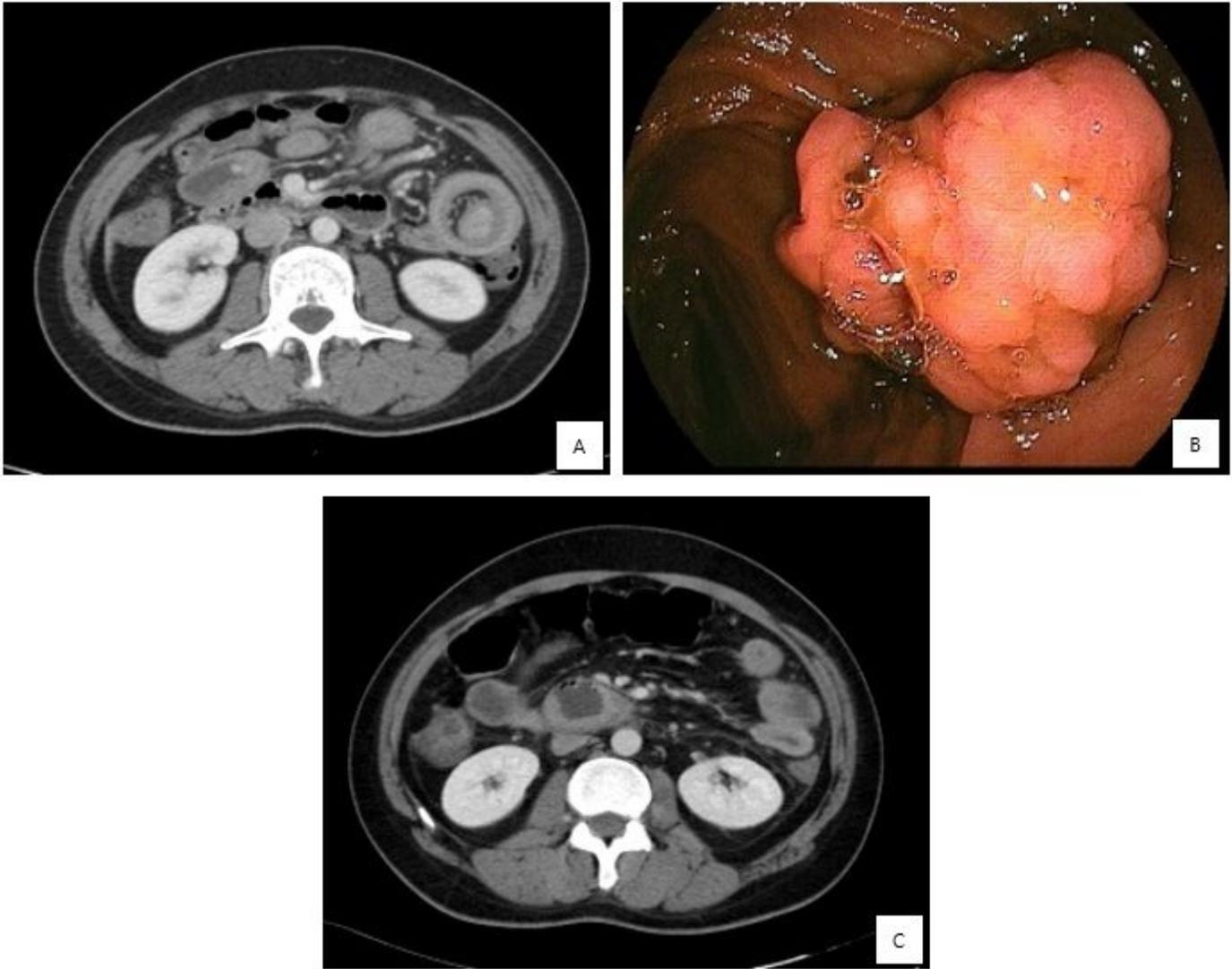


Figure 2

(A) Abdominal computed tomography (CT) showing the target lesion with alternating densities, which were the intussusceptum (inner layer) and intussuscepien (B) Giant polyp which was located Jejunum (C) Abd CT findings after DBE procedure

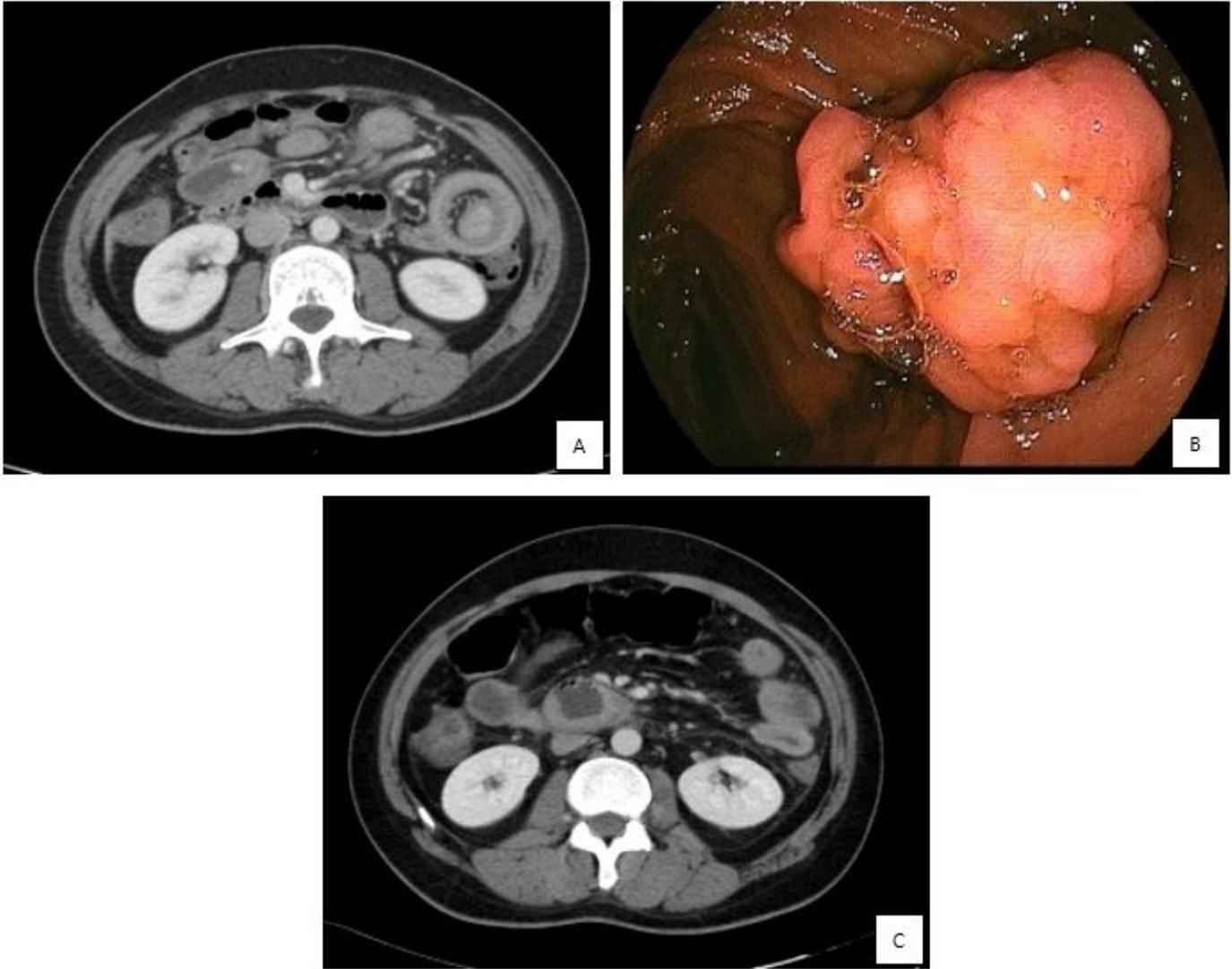


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