Abstract

Introduction: Duplicated appendix is an uncommon entity, typically discovered as an incidental finding during surgery for appendicitis or other abdominal pathologies. It may be associated with other congenital malformations. We report a case of a male neonate incidentally discovered to have an unrecognized variant of duplicated appendix during a laparotomy plus diversion colostomy for imperforate anus at 4 days of age.

Presentation of case: A baby delivered at home from an unbooked pregnancy at term, was referred from a primary care clinic to a specialist referral hospital, with a fever and suspected neonatal sepsis on day 1 of life. The patient had not passed meconium and physical examination revealed an imperforate anus. After initiating treatment for sepsis, the patient underwent a laparotomy where a situs inversus totalis and complete appendiceal duplication was found, with both appendices on the normal site of a single caecum. The appendices were left in situ and a diversion colostomy was performed. The patient did well following surgery and was discharged on postoperative day 10 to await definitive surgery.

Discussion: Appendiceal malformations have been reported either in isolation or in association with other congenital anomalies. Duplicated appendix occurs rarely and the pathogenesis is not fully understood. This case adds more evidence that the classification of appendiceal abnormalities should continue evolving as newer types are described.

Conclusion: Surgeons operating on patients with congenital anomalies must exercise extreme vigilance to identify and document other rare pathologies that may later pose challenges thus avoid morbidity, mortality and potential medicolegal pitfalls.