ROUND LIGAMENT VARICOSITY IN PREGNANCY

Arpita Jaiswal*, Shuchi Jain, Mandar Karambelkar

*Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Science, Sewagram, Wardha, Maharashtra, India

E-mail of Corresponding Author: mandar.karambelkar@gmail.com

Abstract
Groin swelling in pregnancy can give rise to various diagnostic dilemmas. Inguinal hernia not uncommonly may present for the first time in pregnancy because of increase in intraabdominal pressure. It is 10 times less frequent in women than in men. The other differential diagnosis including femoral hernia, enlarged lymph nodes, vascular aneurysm and subcutaneous lipoma. Congestion of the pelvic and iliac veins may give rise to round ligament varicosities mimicking inguinal hernia. The distinction between the two is difficulty clinically as symptoms and signs are similar.

Ultrasound has proved to be a useful tool for differentiating round ligament varicosities from an inguinal hernia. The characteristic ultrasound picture includes a prominent venous plexus with dilated draining veins and typical bag of worms appearance. Round ligament varices require close monitoring during pregnancy as it can lead to rupture of varices or acute variceal thrombosis in peripartum period.

This case highlights the potential difficulty in diagnosing inguinal swelling clinically in pregnancy. Ultrasonography can however clinch the diagnosis and prevent unnecessary surgery and its associated morbidity.

Bilateral inguinal swelling is gravid state is not a common occurrence is obstetric practice. Bilateral round ligament varicosities may be mistaken for inguinal hernias in gravid patients because these conditions have similar presentations. It is very critical to differentiate between varicosities and hernias to avoid performing unnecessary surgery.

Keywords: Inguinal swelling, Round ligament varicosity, Inguinal hernia, Femoral Hernia, Vascular Aneurysm

1. Synopsis
Round ligament varicosities may mimic inguinal hernia clinically in pregnant patient. Thus ultrasonography for diagnosis of inguinal swelling of uncertain origin is recommended.

2. Case Report
A 23 years healthy woman presented with a painful swelling in her left groin region during her second pregnancy. Her first pregnancy was a miscarriage. At 28 weeks of gestation she developed painful swelling over her left groin which became prominent on standing and coughing. After 2 weeks similar swelling appeared on right inguinal area. Gradually the swelling increased and became more painful. Surgical opinion was taken and it was diagnosed as bilateral inguinal hernia on physical examination. Patient had soft painful swelling on the superficial inguinal ring with diameter of 3 × 5cms. Reposition was possible. Swelling used to decrease and disappear on lying down position. Cough impulse lead to enlargement of the swelling. Gradually the swelling was got more and more painful. Clinically hernial obstruction was suspected so ultrasound and Doppler imaging was performed. It revealed round ligament varicosities. She was thus managed conservatively under close observation.

3. Discussion
Groin swelling in pregnancy can give rise to various diagnostic dilemmas. Inguinal hernia not uncommonly may present for the first time in pregnancy because of increase in intraabdominal pressure. It is 10 times less frequent in women than in men. The reported incidence is 1 in 3000. The other differential diagnosis including femoral hernia, enlarged lymph nodes, vascular aneurysm and subcutaneous lipoma. Congestion of the pelvic and iliac veins may give rise to round ligament varicosities mimicking inguinal hernia. The distinction between the two is difficulty clinically as symptoms and signs are similar. Ultrasound has proved to be a useful tool for differentiating round ligament varicosities from an inguinal hernia. The characteristic ultrasound
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Bilateral inguinal masses during pregnancy: A clinical dilemma; Bilateral inguinal swelling is gravid state is not a common occurrence is obstetric practice. Bilateral round ligament varicosities may be mistaken for inguinal hernias in gravid patients because these conditions have similar presentations. It is very critical to differentiate between varicosities and hernias to avoid performing unnecessary surgery.

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