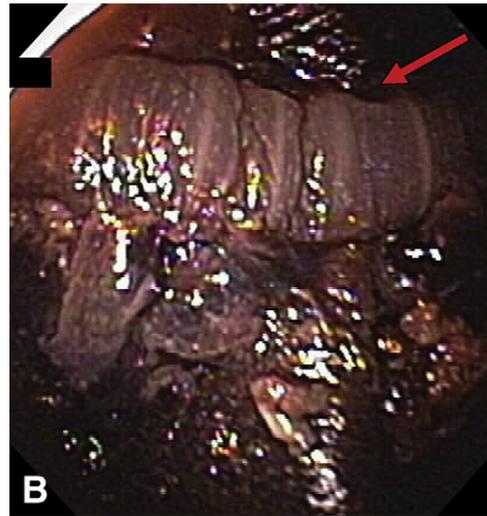
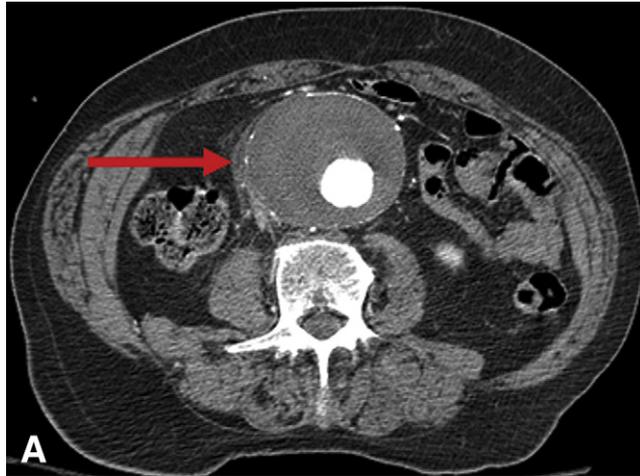


Aortogastric fistula formation 3 days after endovascular stent placement



A 77-year-old man with a known abdominal aortic aneurysm (7.1 × 6.4 cm) and history of peptic ulcer disease status post Billroth I presented to the emergency department with severe abdominal pain.

CT (A) of his abdomen revealed that the aneurysm had increased in size (8.6 × 7.4 cm), and he was taken to the operating room for endovascular aortic repair. He did well intraoperatively. On the third postoperative day, he had massive hematemesis and was intubated for airway protection. His blood pressure was 50/30 mm Hg (normal <120/80 mm Hg), with a heart rate of 120 beats per minute (≥ 60 – ≤ 100 beats per minute). Physical examination revealed sparse bowel sounds and a soft, nontender, and mildly distended abdomen. His hemoglobin had dropped from 10.4 g/dL to 7.2 g/dL (13.5–17.0 g/dL), and his hematocrit was 20.6% (41%–53%). EGD revealed the endovascular stent in

the proximal stomach along the anterior wall, as well as large clots in the stomach and duodenum (B). The family elected not to pursue surgery and the patient died 24 days later.

DISCLOSURE

The authors report that there are no disclosures relevant to this publication.

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Commentary

Aortogastric fistulae are rare and have been documented in patients with peptic ulcer disease, pancreatitis, gastric cancer, after gunshot wounds, and following gastric pull-up operations in which the thoracic aorta and stomach are made to lie adjacent to one another. In this patient, the Billroth operation might have fostered adhesions and altered anatomy that placed the stomach into a romantic liaison with the aorta. A preoperative EGD in this patient might have resolved the question of whether a recurrent ulcer had eroded into the aorta or whether periaortic inflammation and infection initiated migration of the prosthesis through the gastric wall. The brief period between surgery and migration suggests the former. In either case, just as the Emperor Augustus is said to have uttered *acta est fabula* just before he died, once the endoscopist witnessed the aortic endoprosthesis in the gastric lumen, the drama had been acted out; ie, it was curtains.

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