Roundworm in a Chest Drain

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Abstract A 19 year old man who suffered a stab injury in the epigastric region and had a chest drain was referred to our accident and emergency department. A chest x-ray showed left sided opacities with fundic gas in the region of the left hemithorax. A roundworm was seen in the chest tube. An exploratory laparotomy revealed a diaphragmatic tear with a laceration of the anterior wall of the stomach from which multiple roundworms were coming out and had entered the pleural cavity and then the chest drain. The tears were repaired and abdomen closed. The patient is doing well.

Keywords Roundworm chest drain · Diaphragmatic injury

Case

A 19 year old male patient suffered a stab injury in the epigastric region. A chest radiograph showed an opacity in the left side and a chest drain had been placed in a district hospital. The otherwise stable patient was then referred to our accident and emergency department which is a tertiary care institute. A repeat chest x-ray (Fig. 1) revealed left sided opacities with fundic gas in the region of the left hemithorax. The patient then slowly developed features of septicaemia and peritonitis. At this point, a roundworm was seen crawling into the chest tube (Fig. 2). The patient was resuscitated and an exploratory laparotomy was first done. During exploration, he was found to have a diaphragmatic tear with a laceration of the anterior wall of the stomach from which multiple roundworms were coming out. Some

Fig. 1 Left sided opacity in the chest with fundic gas in the chest

Fig. 2 Roundworm in chest drain

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had entered the pleural cavity and then into the chest drain. A thorough pleural and peritoneal lavage was performed. The diaphragmatic tear and gastric wound was repaired. A thoracotomy was not needed. Post

operatively, he developed slight wound discharge which subsided spontaneously in a few days. The chest drain was removed after two weeks. The patient was discharged after three weeks and is presently doing well.