UNUSUAL COMPLICATION OF CRIMINAL ABORTION (A Case Report)

Col P ARORA^{*}, Brig RP ARORA⁺,
Surg Lt Cdr A KAPUR[#]

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Introduction

Complications as a result of induced abortions have dramatically reduced in last two decades due to availability of newer and safer methods. However, a high rate of complications still exist in criminal abortions carried out by untrained midwives. We came across a case of chronic cystitis caused by a rubber catheter lying in the bladder for 6 years, which was introduced by a midwife in an attempt to induce abortion.

Case report

A 30-year-old multipara was admitted for medical termination of pregnancy and tubectomy. She also complained of recurrent attacks of dysuria and fever with chills and rigors of 6 years duration. It followed an induced abortion carried out by a midwife in the village. Patient stated that a rubber tube was introduced by the midwife in the genital tract for induction of abortion. Whether that tube was removed later or not, she had no knowledge. Her menstrual cycles were regular and normal. Last menstrual period was 45 days back. She was gravida 4, para 2, both home deliveries and one induced abortion 6 years back.

Systemic examination revealed no abnormality. Per vaginal examination revealed a hard mass 2"x1/2" in the anterior fornix. Uterus was eight weeks size. Urinalysis revealed albuminuria and numerous pus cells. *E. coli* was grown in culture, haemoglobin was 11.2 g/dL and blood urea 24 mg/dL. Plain radiogram abdomen revealed a hollow radio-opaque shadow in the pelvic region. Cystogram confirmed the foreign body to be in the bladder (Fig. 1). Patient was taken up for MTP, tubectomy, and suprapubic cystotomy. A coiled rubber catheter with dense deposit of salts was removed from the bladder.

Discussion

The main problem in underdeveloped countries is not so much the medical or health services, but the illiteracy, ignorance and reluctance of the peo-

ple to avail of existing facilities. In unwanted pregnancies the problem is secrecy, thus pushing patients to the hands of uneducated, unskilled midwives with no knowledge of anatomy and asepsis.

Introduction of foreign bodies in the uterus and cervix is one of the ancient methods used for induction of abortion which has gradually gone out of practice in institutions due to availability of safer methods. However, it is still being employed more commonly than any other method in most criminal abortions. Due to lack of knowledge of

Fig. 1 :

^{*}Professor & Head (Obstetrics & Gynaecology), Armed Forces Medical College, Pune 411040; ⁺Asst Dir Med Services, HQ (WC) Chandimandir; [#]Graded Specialist, JNHS Jeevanti, Vasco-da-Gama, Goa 2.

anatomy these foreign bodies are wrongly introduced leading to various complications like perforation, infection and injury to adjacent structures. A metal rod from the transverse colon and a stick from the bladder have been recorded in Indian literature [1,2]. Balamba et al reported a case of perforation of uterus with rubber bougies [3].

The nature of foreign bodies employed by midwives may be anything that they can lay their hands on, aided by the patients state of desperation. In this case a rubber catheter was employed for induction of abortion and was wrongly intro-

duced in the bladder leading to chronic cystitis.

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