

Case Report

Mega appendix: A Rare, one of the Longest Appendix Operated

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Abstract: The vermiform appendix is an organ that can have variable sizes, locations as well as functional potentials. We are prompted to report here one of the longest appendix removed to date, measuring about nine and half inches in length.

Keywords: Appendix, Longest, Rare.

INTRODUCTION

The vermiform appendix is an organ that can vary in size, site, and presence, as well as in other clinical and functional aspects. We describe here one of the longest appendix removed to date, measuring about nine and half inches in length.

CASE REPORT

A 25-year-old male was admitted to our surgical department with a history of abdominal pain in right iliac fossa for two days, associated with vomiting. On examination, he appeared pale and apathetic, but he was hemodynamically stable. A vague tender mass was palpated in the right iliac fossa of his abdomen. Hernia orifices were free, and there was no discoloration of the abdomen. Ultrasonography of the abdomen was not conclusive. His white blood count was 15000mm³. Operative exploration showed a long and hooded appendix (Fig. 1) and (Fig. 2) in retrocolic position. The appendix measured about nine and half inch in length, was inflamed. Histopathological examination of the removed specimen confirmed an inflamed appendicular tissue. Appendix was so long that beginning from caecum in the right Iliac fossa, it reached up to hepatic flexure. Posterior taenia coli was felt separately. Post operative period was uneventful.

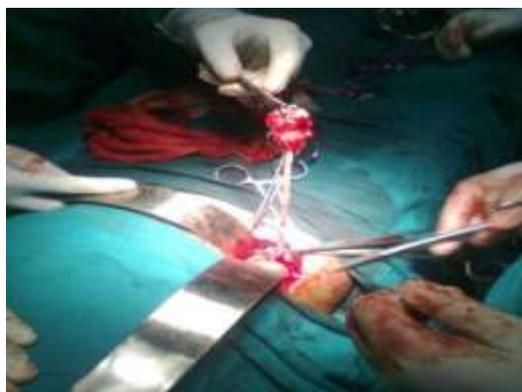


Fig. 1: Arrow showing Appendix being operated



Fig. 2: The removed specimen of appendix. Arrow shows 'Hood' like tissue at the tip

DISCUSSION

Vermiform appendix may vary in size and site and may be present or absent in individuals. In humans appendix is longer in children than in adults, becoming even smaller after midlife. Moreover, about 1 in 100,000 humans are born without an appendix, and rare individuals have been reported to be born with two appendixes [1].

In humans, the appendix averages six to nine cm in length. It is typically longer in males than females. The longest appendixes reported measured 26 cm (10.24 inches) removed at autopsy from a 72-year-old man (Guinness 2007) and 55 cm (21.65 inches) removed from A 13-year-old male [2].

Throughout medical history, many possible functions for the appendix have been suggested, including exocrine, endocrine, and neuromuscular functions [3]. Darwin suggested that the appendix had been used by primate ancestors of humans to digest leaves. Over time, as humans ate fewer leaves, the appendix evolved to a smaller size to make room for the stomach [4].

Currently it is unclear whether the lymphoid tissue in the human appendix performs any specialized function, different from that performed by the much larger amount of lymphatic tissue distributed throughout the gut. Most importantly with regard to vestigiality, there is no evidence from any mammal suggesting that the hominoid vermiform appendix performs functions beyond those of the lymphoid-rich caeca of other primates and mammals that lack distinct appendixes [5].

It is suggested that the appendix may harbor and protect bacteria that are beneficial in the function of the human colon [6]. The appendix may be a haven for useful bacteria when illness flushes those bacteria from the rest of the intestines [7].

In comparison, the appendix removed from our patient was more than twice as long, measuring nine and half inch in length, making it the one of the longest appendix removed to date.

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