Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts?- This Unusual Case Depicts So

Corresponding Author:
Prof. Rajiv R Mahendru,
Consultant, Obs Gyn, MMIMSR, 134003 - India

Submitting Author:
Prof. Rajiv R Mahendru,
Consultant, Obs Gyn, MMIMSR, 134003 - India

Article ID: WMC001641
Article Type: Original Articles
Submitted on: 01-Mar-2011, 02:56:39 PM GMT   Published on: 07-Mar-2011, 05:52:57 PM GMT
Article URL: http://www.webmedcentral.com/article_view/1641
Subject Categories: OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY
Keywords: Ovarian Cyst, Hypothyroidism, Prepubertal

How to cite the article: Mahendru RR, Mittal A, Gaba G. Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts?- This Unusual Case Depicts So. WebmedCentral OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY 2011;2(3):WMC001641

Source(s) of Funding:
MMET

Competing Interests:
No Competing Interests
Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts?- This Unusual Case Depicts So

Author(s): Mahendru RR, Mittal A, Gaba G

Abstract

Presented in this report is apparently the first case of its kind in the medical literature where an 11 year old prepubescent girl who had co-existent presence of hypothyroidism and multiple large ovarian cysts not only had remarkable improvement in her physical appearance with conservative management with L-Thyroxine alone but also had disappearance of her large ovarian cysts without the need of any surgical intervention, whatsoever.

Introduction

Hardly any data is available as to the association of hypothyroidism and ovarian cysts. Till date, the mechanism of cyst formation in ovaries in patients of primary hypothyroidism remains unclear.

Case Report

Written consent was taken from the patient (along with her guardians) and the Departmental Ethical Committee approved this report. A case is presented of a female child aged 11 years, who reported with complaints of increasing obesity and lack of proper growth, lethargy, fatigue, lack of concentration in studies, with no history of menarche or precocious puberty. She had had pain in the pelvic area for last one week. Significant findings on General Physical examination were of stunted growth for her age with weak reflexes and marked obesity (weight 44.5 Kilograms). Her per abdomen examination was normal and on per rectal examination, uterus was apparently of pre-pubertal size with bilateral cystic masses of the size of a tennis ball. Routine laboratory investigations were normal and Thyroid profile status revealed decreased T3 value of 0.25ng/ml and T4 value of 1ng/dl with markedly raised TSH value of 791.42IU/ml. Radiographs of the skull and chest were normal. On ultrasonography of thyroid and upper abdomen no abnormality was detected while that of pelvis showed bilateral ovarian enlargement with multiple loculated cysts measuring 8cm x 7cm x 7cm in right ovary and 7cm x 7cm x 7cm on the left side with uterus being of average prepubertal dimensions (Figure-1). The patient was put on oral L-Thyroxine, 50 mcg. On follow up, the patient started showing signs of improvement within a month as her weight started reducing while pelvic ultrasonography revealed regression in the size of the ovarian cysts. After five months of treatment, her weight was 28.0 kg, thyroid function tests within normal values and marked reduction in the size of the ovarian cysts (Figure-2) and near normal size of the ovaries at one year. This patient is presently on regular treatment and follow-up.

Discussion

Although pathophysiology remains unclear, association of multicystic ovarian disease with hypothyroidism has been described in literature. Various mechanisms were postulated which included altered oestrogen metabolism, hypothalamo-pituitary dysfunction and deranged prolactin metabolism. According to Anasti et al ovarian enlargement in severe hypothyroidism was probably due to stimulation of FSH receptors by unusually high TSH levels. Evers and Rolland confirmed that cross reaction of high TSH could produce FSH- and LH-like activity which might be responsible for the cyst formation in the ovaries. Likely mechanism of ovarian hyperstimulation with hypothyroidism in the present case appears to be mutation in FSH receptors that may further increase the sensitivity of FSH receptors to the TSH as proposed by Vasseur et al and Smith et al. Merchline et al reported that in some cases there might be hyper secretion of one or the other trophic hormones by the pituitary in response to deficiency of one of the endocrine glands (as of thyroid hormone), thereby, stimulating gonadotrophin release and hence FSH and LH leading to symptoms of precocious puberty with or without enlargement of the pituitary gland in response to an end organ deficiency. Both precocious puberty and pituitary enlargement were not to be seen in the case being discussed. With treatment of hypothyroidism alone, there was not only remarkable symptomatic improvement but also normalization of thyroid function tests and resolution of ovarian cysts as in the studies of Hansen et al and Yamashita et al and consequently no surgical intervention was
warranted as reported by Bassam and Ajlouni and Merchline et al.

Conclusion

In a prepubescent female whenever large ovarian cysts are detected, possibility of hypothyroidism should be kept as the diagnosis of this entity is a guide for the conservative management by thyroid hormone replacement therapy as the ovarian cysts regress in size along with improvement in the symptoms of the patient, thereby, avoiding unwarranted surgical intervention.

Conflicts of interest: authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: M.M. EDUCATIONAL TRUST

References


Figure 1. legend: ovarian cysts at the time of presentation
Figure 2. Legend: marked reduction in the size of ovarian cysts with treatment
Illustrations

Illustration 1

Figure-1. Legend: ovarian cysts at the time of presentation
Illustration 2

Marked reduction in the size of ovarian cysts with treatment
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Reviews

Review 1

Review Title: Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts? - This Unusual Case Depicts so

Posted by Mr. Govind N Purohit on 08 Mar 2011 06:17:03 AM GMT

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the subject of the article within the scope of the subject category?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the interpretations / conclusions sound and justified by the data?</td>
<td>Partly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is this a new and original contribution?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does this paper exemplify an awareness of other research on the topic?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Are structure and length satisfactory?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Can you suggest brief additions or amendments or an introductory statement that will increase the value of this paper for an international audience?</td>
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<td>Can you suggest any reductions in the paper, or deletions of parts?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Is the quality of the diction satisfactory?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the illustrations and tables necessary and acceptable?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the references adequate and are they all necessary?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Are the keywords and abstract or summary informative?</td>
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Rating: 4

Comment:
The article should be a short communication and not a full length article or it should be a case report. The first two lines both in the abstract and introduction are contradictory to the literature cited by the authors themselves. Authors must refrain from mentioning first of its kind or like statements. The Reference numbers mentioned in the running text should be superscripted. I presume the role of thyroid in ovarian cyst formation is known and so the title of the MS appears to be over emphasized. Can change the statement "as proposed by Vasseur et al....Smith et al" to as proposed previously 6,7. I doubt whether the citation BJOG 1981 is the proper way to cite Br J Obst Gynec

Competing interests: No

Invited by the author to make a review on this article? : No

Experience and credentials in the specific area of science:
Work on ovarian cysts in cows

Publications in the same or a related area of science: Yes


How to cite: Purohit G.Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts?- This Unusual Case Depicts so[Review of the article 'Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts?' by J].WebmedCentral 1970;2(3):WMCRW00557
Review 2

Review Title: Possible corelation between prepubery ovarian cysts and hypothyroidism

Posted by Ms. Judy S Cohain on 08 Mar 2011 06:03:21 AM GMT

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Rating: 9

Comment:
Very interesting case study with good review of the literature. Much appreciated!

Competing interests: none

Invited by the author to make a review on this article? : No

Experience and credentials in the specific area of science:
30 years of private obgyn practice

Publications in the same or a related area of science: No

How to cite: Cohain J. Possible corelation between prepubery ovarian cysts and hypothyroidism[Review of the article 'Is Hypothyroidism a Cause of Ovarian Cysts? - This Unusual Case Depicts So ’ by ].WebmedCentral 1970;2(3):WMCRW00556
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