Coccygeal tail in newborn.

A case of coccygeal tail (human tail) in a new born is reported. This is a rare entity and is a true tail as it contains adipose, muscle, connective and nerve tissue.

This case reports on a newborn child, the mother is para 3 gravida 3. The mother had a normal pregnancy and did not take any medication. The newborn weighed 2.9 kg, with normal apgar score and was referred to the surgeon as the gynecologist noticed a 4.5 cm tail from the coccygeal region. (Figure 1). The provisional diagnosis of coccygeal tail (human tail) was excised (Figure 2). The biopsy reported a fibro fatty, muscle, nervous tissue covered with skin and a diagnosis of coccygeal tail.

Disturbance of fetal tail regression, which occurs at 6 weeks of gestation, was attributed to the formation of fetal tail. Just over 100 cases were reported in the literature. A human tail which contains coccygeal vertebra is rare and this was reported accompanied with lumbosacral lipoma and spina bifida.

Human tail can be diagnosed by prenatal ultrasound at 14-16 weeks gestation and the tail disappears at 22-23 weeks. This may manifest as pilonidal sinus, deep dimples or scarred tissue as noticed in six patients studied by Zimmer et al.

Human tail has been classified either as a true tail or pseudotail. A true or vestigial tail has a histological consistency of adipose, connective muscle and nervous tissue. This clinically, as presented in our case, arises from the most distal remnant of the embryonic tail while a pseudotail represent a variety of lesions having in common a lumbosacral pretusion and superficial resemblance to vestigial tail.

Our patient, which had excision of "his" tail, has had no further problems.

Z. Al Habbal
The Medical College
Mosul University Teaching Hospital
Mosul
Iraq

References