

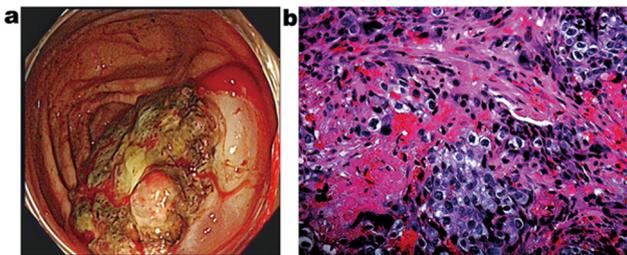


## Image of the Month

## Rare case of severe lower gastrointestinal bleeding: Primary colonic choriocarcinoma

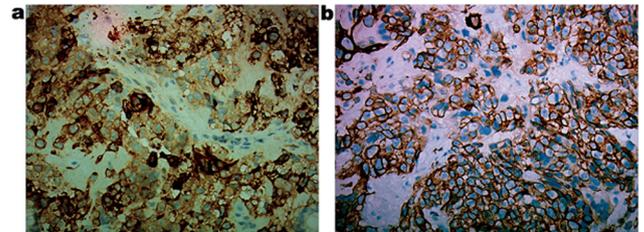
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**Fig. 1.** (a) Colonoscopy showing a large discoid, friable lesion with active oozing of blood in the ascending colon. (b) HE staining shows co-existence of choriocarcinoma and adenocarcinoma cells (400 $\times$ ).

A 29-year-old woman presented with intermittent hematochezia for 3 weeks. Her physical examination was remarkable for pallor with hemoglobin level of 5.3 g/dl after multiple transfusions. Abdominal ultrasonography and thoracoabdominal computed tomography (CT) revealed nothing but scattered nodules in both lungs. After admission, she presented with deteriorating paraplegia resulting from spinal cord compression confirmed by magnetic resonance imaging. Colonoscopy showed a large discoid, friable lesion in the ascending colon, with active oozing of blood (Fig. 1a) and she received endoscopic argon plasma coagulation. Histopathology of endoscopic biopsy suggested a poorly differentiated adenocarcinoma (Fig. 1b). Immunohistochemical staining was strongly positive for beta human chorionic gonadotropin ( $\beta$ -HCG) (Fig. 2a) and cytokeratin 7 (CK7) (Fig. 2b), while negative for cytokeratin, villin, caudal type homeobox 2 (CDX2), supporting a diagnosis of choriocarcinoma. Pathological findings of CT-guided lung biopsy also revealed metastatic choriocarcinoma. Furthermore, this patient denied any gestational event in recent three years, eventu-



**Fig. 2.** Immunohistochemical staining results of endoscopic biopsy (400 $\times$ ): (a) strongly positive for  $\beta$ -HCG. (b) strongly positive for CK7.

ally, a diagnosis of primary colonic choriocarcinoma was confirmed. Unfortunately, due to suspected intra-vertebral metastasis, she died a few days after diagnosis.

Extragenital primary choriocarcinoma is an extremely rare disease with dismal prognosis [1]. This case presented with severe lower gastrointestinal bleeding, which was an atypical, but potentially life-threatening symptom of primary colonic choriocarcinoma.

**Conflict of interest**

None declared.

**Reference**

- [1] Maehira H, Shimizu T, Sonoda H, et al. A rare case of primary choriocarcinoma in the sigmoid colon. *World J Gastroenterol* 2013;19:6683–8.

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