

An Easy Way of Diagnosis of Anal Fistula in Infants

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Abstract

Perianal diseases are not uncommon in infants. Although perianal abscesses are often encountered in pediatric surgery clinics, perianal fistulas are rare in infants. They may present in infant as recurrent perianal abscesses.

An anal fistula can easily be seen by using hydrogen peroxide in a case. A baby (3-month-old male) was brought with recurrent perianal abscesses and inflammation. The anal fistula was found out during irrigating the abscess cavity with hydrogen peroxide with 24 gauge IV catheter. Abscess cavity was very little and anal fistula may have not been thought in this case but bubbles were alarmed us then anal fistulotomy were performed. Postoperative follow-up was uneventful. There was no recurrence abscess or fistula during 18-month follow-up.

Keywords

Hydrogen peroxide, Fistula, Abscess

Case

A baby (3-month-old male) was brought with recurrent perianal abscesses and inflammation since 1 month-old. He was treated multiple times with conservative treatment because of fever, agitation, perianal inflammation and abscess. He was operated under general anesthesia. There was small cavity around anus. To avoid damaging the delicate tissues with a silver probe, we gave some 3% H₂O₂ (hydrogen peroxide) via catheter into the cavity. We have diagnosed the anal fistula when we saw the bubbles in anal canal (Figure 1). Then we made anal fistulotomy. Postoperative follow-up was uneventful. There was no recurrence abscess or fistula during 18-month follow-up.

Discussion

Anal fistulas may present in infants as recurrent perianal abscesses.

Conservative treatment is sufficient for complete resolution of perianal abscess in most infants [1]. Many infants were treated with conservative way in our clinic, a few cases were persistent so that anal fistula was questioned.

Anal fistulas' diagnosis are challenging in infants because of size. In adults enteric fluid may come through this fistula. Digital examination, endoanal ultrasound may contribute to make the diagnosis in children but diagnosis of anal fistula in infants is very hard to find by these methods.

Aust N used hydrogen peroxide to identify internal opening of anal fissula and perianal abscess [2]. These studies were performed in adults.

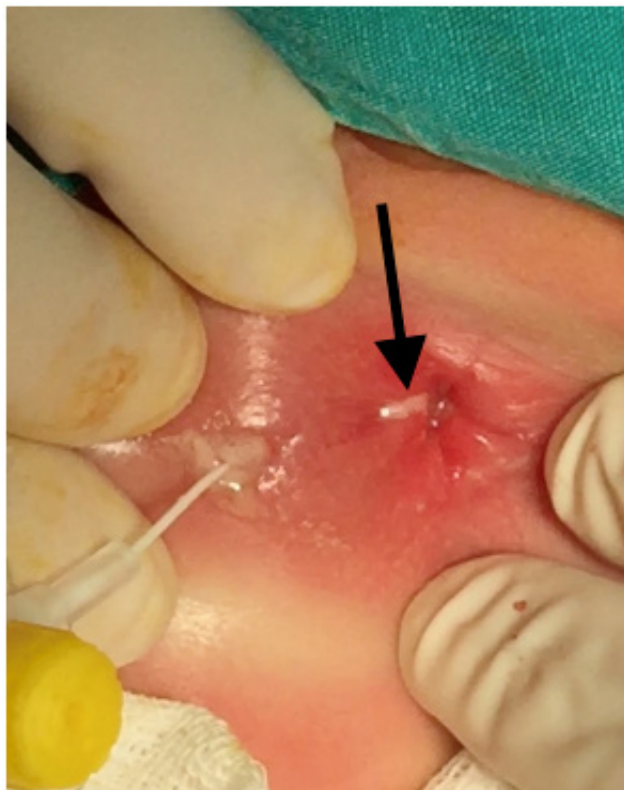


Figure 1: Bubbles in anal canal that shows anal fistula.

It is also used in pilonidal sinus. Aldagal et al. [3] reported that H_2O_2 causes an opening and, at the same time, lining of the tracts leading to precise delineation and prevents extra ordinary diffusion of methylene blue into normal tissue greatly minimizing the removal of unnecessary surrounding normal tissues and enhancing rapid healing and less rate of recurrence.

Hydrogen peroxide is the simplest peroxide (a compound with an oxygen–oxygen single bond). It is used as an oxidizer, bleaching agent and disinfectant. It is used in a variety of field in Medicine.

Hydrogen peroxide may use to irrigate the abscess cavity. Once we were irrigating the anal abscess cavity with hydrogen peroxide (3%) with 24 gauge IV catheter we noticed bubbles in the anus. Abscess cavity was very little and anal fistula may have not been thought in this case, but bubbles were alarmed us then anal fistulotomy were performed.

Conclusion

Hydrogen peroxide can be used to find out the tiny anal fistula. It may be a simple way of diagnosis of anal fistula in babies.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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