

CELIAC DISEASE AND PORTAL HYPERTENSION: A RARE AND MULTIFACTORIAL ASSOCIATION

Nawal Lagdali

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A 30-year retrospective study of 344 celiac disease patients found that 5.8% had portal hypertension, most commonly presenting with abdominal pain, weight loss, and esophageal varices, with liver biopsy showing porto-sinusoidal vascular disease in 40% and celiac cirrhosis in 20%.

KEY POINTS

- Among 20 patients with both celiac disease and portal hypertension, the most frequent symptoms were abdominal pain and weight loss (45% each), followed by ascites (35%), and splenomegaly was observed in 70%.
- Liver biopsy findings included porto-sinusoidal vascular disease (40%), celiac cirrhosis (20%), granulomatous hepatitis (15%), and normal histology (25%), while esophageal varices were present in 55%.
- Portal hypertension led to the diagnosis of celiac disease in 4 patients, and in non-adherent patients, progression of varices and cirrhosis occurred in 20% over 5 years.
- The authors conclude that gluten-free diet adherence appears to slow hepatic deterioration and variceal progression, and recommend screening for celiac disease in cases of unexplained portal hypertension.

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