

Answers to Medical Quiz

A1. Collapsed left lung, moderate mediastinal shift, a structure occupying the left hemithorax with an air-fluid level which could be mistaken as the stomach in the chest.

A2. Traumatic Diaphragmatic Rupture. It could be confirmed by inserting a nasogastric tube, which would appear in the thoracic cavity because the stomach is displaced upward.

A3. Resuscitate and stabilize the patient, primary surgical repair of the diaphragmatic tear with non-absorbable suture, mesh is rarely used.

DISCUSSION

Traumatic Diaphragmatic rupture is a rare occurrence especially in the pediatric population; it is less than 2% of all blunt abdominal injuries¹. The majority of diaphragmatic injuries are due to deceleration injuries such as motor vehicle accidents.

A simple chest x-ray is usually diagnostic, but an ultrasound or CT may sometimes be necessary. Initially, the chest x-ray was normal. The diagnosis was confirmed after a repeat x-ray two weeks later.

The most common site of rupture is left-side because the right is protected by the liver. However, right-sided diaphragmatic ruptures are often associated with a higher mortality and late presentation^{2,3}.

CONCLUSION

A high index of suspicion is required in every patient following blunt abdominal trauma especially when the event is un-witnessed. Diagnosis is generally accomplished by chest x-ray, but occasionally ultrasound or CT is required.

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