Endoscopic placement of a large-bore covered selfexpandable metallic stent for cholangitis caused by mucus from a pancreatic mucinous neoplasm

A 76-year-old woman, in whom an intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm (IPMN) of the pancreas head had been diagnosed 28 months earlier, was admitted for the treatment of cholangitis; however, she refused surgical treatment. Upon progression, she had experienced recurrent cholangitis for 16 months caused by mucus within the bile duct, which was coming from an IPMN-linked fistula (**•** Fig. 1). To preserve bile flow, 10-mm-diameter covered self-expandable metallic stents were placed endoscopically. However, the procedure had to be repeated five times in 8 months because the stents migrated distally or were clogged by mucus despite preventative measures, such as placement above the papilla of Vater, simultaneous placement of a covered self-expandable metallic stent and a double pigtail stent to prevent migration, partial stent-instent placement to connect the hilar biliary duct and the duodenum, and side-byside placement of two covered self-expandable metallic stents to occlude the fistula completely.

By the time of the sixth episode of cholangitis, large-bore covered self-expandable metallic stents, 20mm in diameter and 80mm in length (ComVi duodenal stent; Taewoong Medical, Seoul, South Korea), had become commercially available in Japan. In a previous endoscopic procedure, mucus from another fistula, between the duodenal bulb and the IPMN, had been noted (**>** Fig. 2); thus there was an alternative route for pancreatic outflow. Therefore, we attempted to control the cholangitis by blocking the fistula between the bile duct and the IPMN; a large-bore covered self-expandable metallic stent was successfully placed across the papilla (**Fig.3**). After the procedure, pancreatitis was not noted, and the duration of stent patency was more than 6 months, as a result of the blocking effect of the covered membrane (> Fig. 4).

Generally, a long period of stent patency is not obtained following endoscopic treatment in such cases [1-4]. However, largebore covered self-expandable metallic stents may improve patency, although their use is limited to cases in which fistulas produce pancreatic outflow.

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Competing interests: None



**Fig. 1** Coronal contrast-enhanced computed tomographic scan reveals an intraductal papilary mucinous neoplasm in the pancreas head penetrating the bile duct and a fistula with a large diameter.



**Fig.2** Duodenoscopy during prior stent placement shows a large amount of mucus outflow from another fistula, between the duodenal bulb and the intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm.



**Fig.3** Transpapillary placement of a large-bore covered self-expandable metallic stent. **a** A large amount of mucus is squeezed out by expansion of stent. **b** The stent is placed across the papilla with approximately 10 mm of its distal end exposed to the duodenal lumen. **c** Another fistula is located about 3 cm proximal to the main papilla.



Fig. 4 Coronal contrast-enhanced computed tomographic scan 6 months after placement of a largebore covered self-expandable metallic stent shows the flow of mucus into the bile duct to be completely blocked; mucus was not observed within the large-bore covered self-expandable metallic stent, even though the stent was pushed inwards at the location of the fistula.

## Naotaka Hayasaka<sup>1,2</sup>, Tsuyoshi Hayashi<sup>1</sup>, Michihiro Ono<sup>1</sup>, Hirotoshi Ishiwatari<sup>1</sup>, Naoki Uemura<sup>1</sup>, Toshinori Okuda<sup>2</sup>, Junji Kato<sup>1</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Departments of Medical Oncology and Hematology, Sapporo Medical University School of Medicine, Sapporo, Japan
- <sup>2</sup> Departments of Hematology and Oncology, Oji General Hospital, Tomakomai, Japan

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## **Corresponding author**

Tsuyoshi Hayashi Departments of Medical Oncology and Hematology Sapporo Medical University School of Medicine South-1, West-16, Chuo-ku Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-8543 Japan Fax: +81-11-612-7987 thayashi69@sapmed.ac.jp