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POLYORCHIDISM ASSOCIATED WITH CRYPTORCHIDISM*

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Polyorchidism (or polyorchism) is an unusual anomaly in which a supernumerary testis is encountered unilaterally. Fewer than 60 cases have been reported in the literature[1-4]. The condition is usually asymptomatic and thought to develop as a result of a duplication or a transverse division of the genital ridge. Due to the rarity of this anomaly, we present in this article a case of polyorchidism associated with cryptorchidism.

Case Report

A six-year-old boy was admitted to the hospital with the diagnosis of left undescended testis. On examination, the right testis was found to be normal but the left was absent in the scrotum. There was a palpable mass, 1.5 × 1.5 cm in dimension, in the inguinal region. On exploration there were two testes in this mass, each having its own epididymis and vas deferens (Fig. 1). The soft, atrophic testis was surgically removed and the other placed in the scrotum.

Discussion

Polyorchidism is encountered very rarely. An additional or supernumerary testis from the same genital ridge descends, more or less completely, into the same side of the scrotum[1]. The extra testis may be larger or smaller than its mate. It may be accompanied by a normal epididymis and vas deferens that communicates with the ductal system of the other testis. In this event the supernumerary testis may show normal histology and makes a valid contribution to spermatogenesis, or it may have no ductal attachments and rarely shows histologic evidence of sperm production[2,3].

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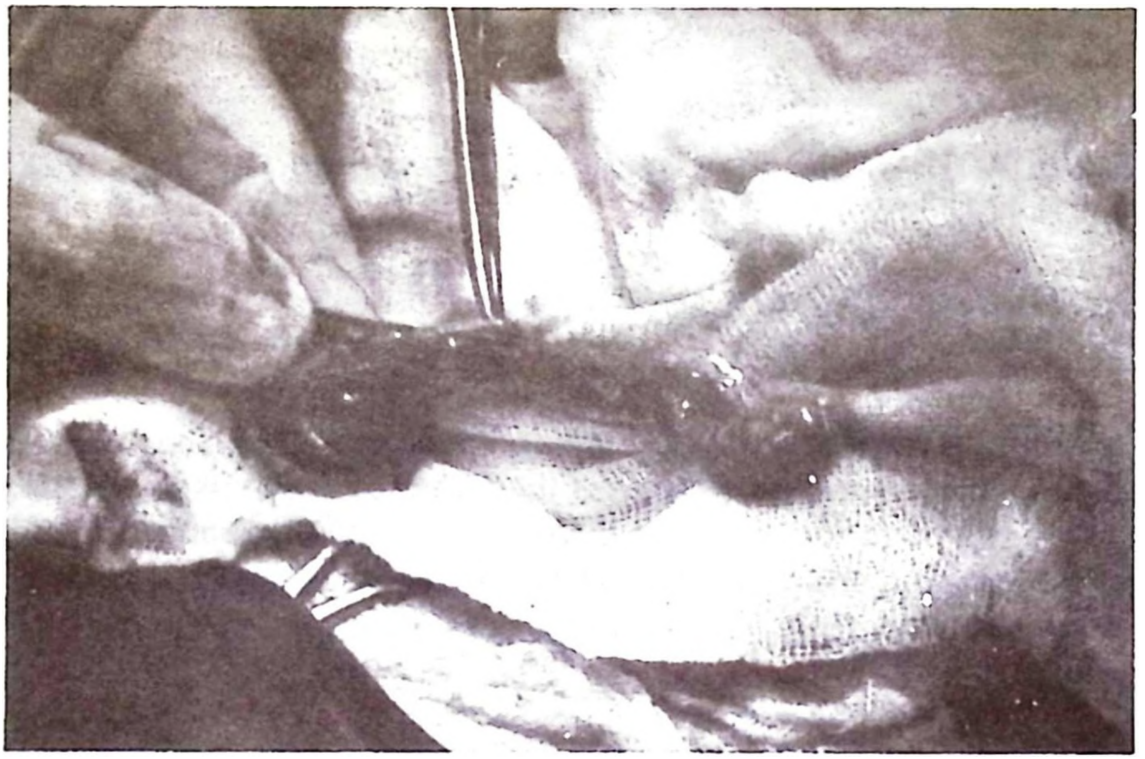

Fig. 1: Duplicated testes during inguinal exploration.

The condition is usually asymptomatic unless torsion of the accessory testis or another complication develops. Polyorchidism is associated with incomplete descent of one or both ipsilateral testes in 15 percent of cases and with an indirect hernia in 30 percent. No specific treatment is necessary in the absence of secondary complications. However, the testis should be surgically removed if on exploration it proves to be atrophic and nonattached.

Summary

A six-year-old boy diagnosed as having left-sided polyorchidism associated with cryptorchidism is presented and this rare congenital anomaly is discussed.

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