

INTRODUCTION

- Post-surgical hypoparathyroidism is a well known complication of total thyroidectomy. It may occur as transitory hypoparathyroidism that spontaneously recover within a few weeks/months and as permanent hypoparathyroidism needing long-term treatment.
- Only few cases of hypoparathyroidism newly diagnosed many years after surgery have been reported.
- We present a patient with hypoparathyroidism that became clinically evident 15 years after the thyroid surgery.

1998

- 18-year-old female, submitted to total thyroidectomy for papillary thyroid carcinoma (pT2N1bM0) at another institution.
- She might have done radioiodine ablation therapy (we do not know the dose neither post-therapy scan).

2009

- She was referred to Endocrinology consultation in September/09 for follow-up.
- No evidence of recurrence, so far, and the patient remained clinically asymptomatic.

2012

- In March/12 she was observed in the Emergency Department due to complaints of hand paresthesias and carpal spasm.
- Severe hypocalcaemia was diagnosed:
Ca=5,4mg/dL [8,8;10,6], Ca²⁺= 0,68mg/dL [1,15; 1,35]
- She was treated with i.v. calcium gluconate and after resolution of signs and symptoms was discharged on calcitriol, calcium carbonate and cholecalciferol therapy.

- Due to constipation, she abandoned by her own initiative calcitriol a month later.

2013

- In May/12 the analytical study of calcium metabolism revealed postsurgical hypoparathyroidism, normal renal function and vitamin D
PTH=10.2pg/mL [10;65], Ca=4.1mEq/L [4.2-5.1], Ca²⁺=2.04mmol/L [2.26-2.64], PO₄³⁻=4.6mg/dL [2.7-4.5], Mg²⁺=1.50mEq/L [1.55;2.05]
- The patient is now asymptomatic on supplementation with calcitriol, calcium and cholecalciferol.

CONCLUSION

- Late-onset hypoparathyroidism appearing years after total thyroidectomy is a rare condition.
- Symptoms of hypocalcemia may be latent and subtle (such as weakness, tiredness, irritability and depression) and thus attributed to other diseases.
- Although hypocalcemia typically occur after surgery, progressive atrophy of the parathyroid glands, leading to its insufficiency years after thyroid surgery, may result in a late latent hypocalcemia.
- Although we lack data on radioactive iodine (I¹³¹) therapy and she is not able to ensure us that information, it is another possible factor contributing to late hypoparathyroidism.

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