The following abstract will be presented at the Southern Medical Association Annual Scientific Assembly, October 30-November 1, 2014 in Destin, Florida.

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Objectives

Upon completion of the lecture, attendees should be better prepared to:

1) Understand the pathogenesis of hemobilia.
2) Diagnose hemobilia.
3) Implement effective strategies for treating hemobilia.

Background/Knowledge Gap: Hemobilia is a complex disease with varied causes and methods of diagnosis. Lack of knowledge of this disease process can quickly lead to fatal outcomes for patients. Knowledge of the current management strategies of hemobilia allows the physician to quickly and effectively treat patients with the disease.

Methods/Design: A current literature review was performed by searching the terms “hemobilia management” in the PubMed search engine. Original articles were selected. Results were limited to the most recent 10 years and papers in English. The 78 remaining articles were reviewed for applicability. 37 articles were deemed to meet inclusion criteria of relevance. Articles were categorized by hemobilia treatment method and therein reviewed.

Results/Findings: Despite the classically described presentation of acute upper gastrointestinal bleeding, biliary colic, and obstructive jaundice, hemobilia can present in a variety of ways. Methods of diagnosis will depend on specific presentation, but angiography is considered the gold standard. Treatment begins with immediate patient resuscitation. Interventional radiology should be used as a first step in treatment. Coil or chemical embolization can often control the bleeding. A stent may be deployed when embolization fails or is contraindicated. Surgery, while previously a first line treatment, is now generally indicated only in cases involving unstable patients, for extra-hepatic bleeding, or after failed embolization attempts.

Conclusions/Implications: Optimal management of a patient with hemobilia depends on knowledge of the disease. Quick diagnosis and treatment initiation are of utmost importance. Further, cost reduction may be employed by using the most efficacious diagnostic tool and initial treatment strategy. Early use of angiography for diagnosis and treatment may help to achieve these goals.

Disclosure

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