66 y/o male with a history of vasculitis presents with abdominal pain and skin rash

Edward Gillis, DO
Supine Abdominal Radiograph
Small bowel vasculitis
Supine AXR demonstrating multiple loops of dilated small bowel (red arrows). A large segment of small bowel demonstrates uniform, regular thickening of folds with sharp delineation (yellow arrows).
Small Bowel Vasculitis

Imaging Features

- Uniform, regular thickening of folds secondary to edema or hemorrhage
- Sharp delineation of bowel folds with spike-like configuration
- May see separation of bowel loops secondary to bleeding into mesentery.
Small Bowel Vasculitis

General Features

- Inflammation of small bowel vessels due to systemic vasculitides.
- Different vessel sizes affected based on the particular vasculitis, but imaging findings usually overlap.
- Thickening of bowel wall folds is due to hemorrhage, edema, or ischemia.
- Predilection for jejunum.

Complications

- Ileus, perforation, ischemia, hemorrhage, stricture, fistula
Small Bowel Vasculitis

- Diseases with uniform, regular bowel wall thickening
  - SLE and other vasculitides
  - Lymphatic obstruction secondary to malignancy
  - Edema from low protein states (cirrhosis, nephrotic syndrome, protein-losing enteropathy)
  - Ischemic bowel disease
  - Anticoagulant therapy
  - Hemophilia
  - Coagulation defects (primary or malignancy related)
    - Hypothrombinemia, leukemia, myeloma, lymphoma, certain carcinomas
References

