

80 y/o M presents with nausea,
vomiting and abdominal
distension

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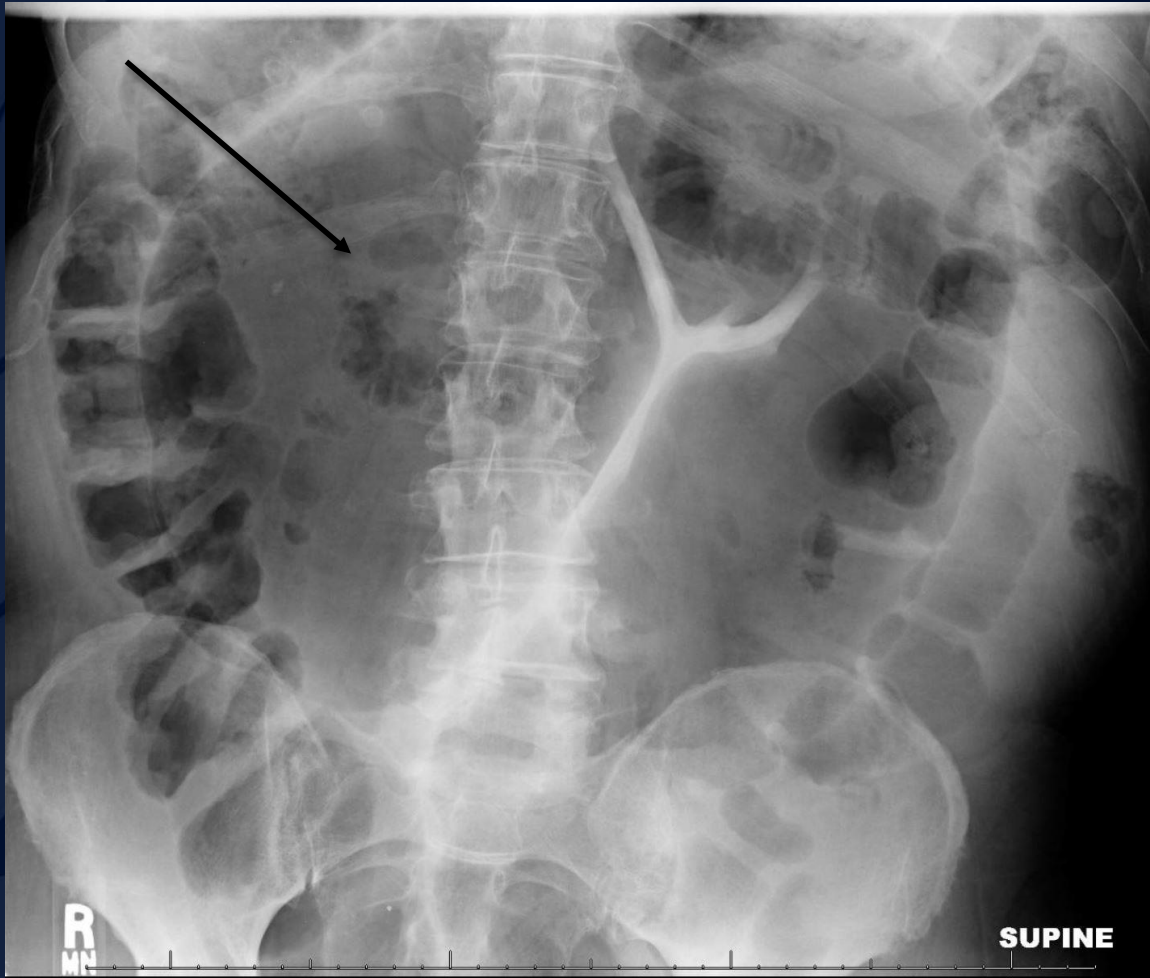






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Sigmoid volvulus



Supine film of the abdomen shows marked dilation of the sigmoid colon (black arrow). The sigmoid is folded back upon itself. The sigmoid extends into the upper abdomen.



Coronal CT demonstrates dilated sigmoid colon (white arrow)

Sigmoid volvulus

What is it?

Torsion or twisting of sigmoid colon around its mesenteric axis. Mortality rate is 20-25%. Serious complication is bowel ischemia

Most common etiology

Chronic constipation and/or laxative abuse

Fiber-rich diet

Chagas disease

Associations

Chronic neurological conditions (e.g. Parkinson disease, MS, pseudobulbar palsy)

Medications from chronic psychiatric conditions (e.g. chronic schizophrenia)

Sigmoid volvulus

Imaging features

Abdominal radiograph: large, dilated loop of colon, often with a few air-fluid levels. Signs including coffee bean sign, Frimann Dahl's sign, absent rectal sign

Fluoroscopy: water soluble contrast enema demonstrates "bird beak sign"

CT: large gas-filled loop without haustral markings

Rx

Rectal tube insertion

Top differential

Caecal volvulus

Colonic pseudo-obstruction

Large bowel obstruction from other causes

References

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