

# Colorectal cancer and an air pistol pellet

**C**olorectal cancer is the 4th most common cancer in the UK (Cancer Research UK, 2019). It frequently metastasizes to the liver, and magnetic resonance imaging is recommended for staging (Cunningham et al, 2017).

A multi-morbid 78-year-old woman presenting with abdominal pain underwent a colonoscopy that identified a hepatic flexure adenocarcinoma. Preoperative staging with a non-contrast computed tomography chest, abdomen and pelvis was pT3N0M0.

At the age of 7 years, she had been shot in the abdomen by an air pistol pellet that was not identified at laparotomy at that time. The authors were concerned that this might affect her current management.

On review of her staging and historical scans, the pellet was identified close to the inferior vena cava (*Figures 1 and 2*). The risk of movement and radiofrequency-induced damage to the inferior vena cava was unclear.

It was decided to assess the liver for metastases with ultrasound rather than magnetic resonance imaging. The ultrasound

was normal and she underwent a successful open right hemicolectomy with standard cancer follow-up care. **BJHM**

Cancer Research UK. 2019. Cancer incidence for common cancers. (accessed 27 January 2019) <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/incidence/common-cancers-compared#heading-Zero>  
 Cunningham C, Leong K, Clark S et al. Association of Coloproctology of Great Britain & Ireland (ACPGBI): Guidelines for the Management of Cancer of the Colon, Rectum and Anus (2017) - Diagnosis, Investigations and Screening. *Colorectal Dis.* 2017 Jul;19 Suppl 1:9–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/codi.13703>

**Miss Harpreet KSI Singh**, Core Surgical Trainee, Department of Colorectal Surgery, West Middlesex University Hospital, Isleworth TW7 6AF

**Dr Emily Cribb**, Senior Surgical House Officer, Department of Colorectal Surgery, West Middlesex University Hospital, Isleworth

**Dr Ajit Bains**, Consultant Radiologist, Department of Radiology, West Middlesex University Hospital, Isleworth

**Mr Nikhil Pawa**, Consultant Colorectal and General Surgery, Department of Colorectal Surgery, West Middlesex University Hospital, Isleworth

Correspondence to: Miss HKS Singh ([harpreet.sekhon@nhs.net](mailto:harpreet.sekhon@nhs.net))

**Figure 1.** Axial slice through the abdomen of the non-contrast staging computed tomography showing a 5.6 mm x 5.6 mm foreign body immediately lateral to the inferior vena cava.



**Figure 2.** Axial slice through the abdomen of a historic computed tomography kidney, ureter, and bladder showing a 5.6 mm x 5.6 mm foreign body antero-lateral to the inferior vena cava.

