

Spontaneous Resolution Of Syrxinx Following Significant Weight Loss

Doctors at Emory University in Atlanta have published an interesting case report involving the spontaneous resolution of a large syrinx. Although rare, there have been previous reports in the medical literature regarding the spontaneous resolution of syrinxes, but the authors of this report believe it is the first published case linked to weight loss. The case involved a 42 year old woman with a BMI of 52, which put her in the morbidly obese category. She was experiencing minor pain and loss of sensation in both hands. An MRI showed a large syrinx that extended past the cervical region to the thoracic and was 14mm in diameter at its widest. Despite the syrinx, the MRI showed no Chiari malformation and she also had no symptoms associated with intracranial hypertension (which has been linked to high BMI). Since her symptoms were mild, the doctors chose to treat her conservatively and recommended a weight-loss regimen. She was then seen by a nutritionist and a bariatric surgeon and subsequently underwent gastric-bypass surgery. The next time she was evaluated neurologically, she had lost over 80 pounds, her hand symptoms had improved, and the syrinx was stable. One year later, her neurological symptoms were completely gone and the syrinx was essentially resolved as well. Curiously, she now had a 5mm herniation, but no associated symptoms. While it is possible that the syrinx resolution and weight loss were coincidental, the authors believe the weight loss may have increased the absorption of spinal fluid in her brain thus lowering her intracranial pressure and allowing the syrinx to drain.

Source: Spontaneous resolution of cervicothoracic spinal cord syrinx after significant weight loss. Bray DP, Bouobda G, Laxpati NG, Gary MF. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry. 2021 Jul 14.

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