Fetus papyraceus in twin pregnancy: A rare case report

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Fetus papyraceus is a rare condition characterized by the intrauterine death of a fetus, which is then becoming mummified and takes a parchment-like appearance. We report a case of fetus papyraceus diagnosed during caesarean section for breech presentation not suitable for External Cephalic Version (ECV). Case Description: A 23-year-old Malay primigravida was admitted to Hospital Pulau Pinang for ECV due to breech presentation at a gestation of 37+4 weeks. However, transabdominal ultrasound revealed reduced liquor with amniotic fluid index of 6 cm. Patient was re-counselled regarding low successful rate of ECV thus advised for caesarean section as mode of delivery. Intraoperative findings during the Caesarean Section revealed twin gestation. The first twin was a male baby in breech presentation, weighing 2450 grams with good Apgar score. During examination of placenta, noted there was another mummified fetal head attached within the chorionic membrane of the placenta which confirmed findings of fetus papyraceus. The surgery was uneventful. Both the mother and the baby were well and discharged home.

Discussion: Fetus papyraceus is known as intrauterine death of fetus which is failed to completely reabsorb during second or third trimesters. In this patient, a mummified fetus only found during caesarean section for breech presentation not suitable for ECV. The presence of mummified fetal head possibly causing the growing twin unable to turn into cephalic presentation and the reduced of AFI secondary to resorption of amniotic fluid with mummification of the fetal parts leading to low successful rate of ECV.