

# After the cry, a curse: Postpartum choriocarcinoma following normal delivery

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Postpartum choriocarcinoma is a rare but life-threatening complication occurring in approximately 1 in 40,000 normal deliveries. This aggressive gestational trophoblastic neoplasm often presents with nonspecific symptoms mimicking benign postpartum conditions, leading to frequent diagnostic delays. Although highly chemosensitive, outcomes deteriorate significantly with advanced disease at presentation. **Case Description:** A 36-year-old multiparous woman presented with severe vaginal bleeding two weeks after an uncomplicated home delivery. Initial management for retained products revealed choriocarcinoma on histopathology. Imaging demonstrated an 8 cm uterine mass with lung metastases ( $\beta$ -hCG >100,000 IU/L), classifying as FIGO Stage III disease. Emergency hysterectomy controlled haemorrhage, but progressing metastases necessitated urgent chemotherapy referral. **Discussion:** This case underscores the diagnostic challenges of postpartum choriocarcinoma, particularly following unsupervised deliveries. Three critical lessons emerge: (1) choriocarcinoma must be considered in refractory postpartum haemorrhage regardless of delivery circumstances, (2) routine  $\beta$ -hCG monitoring is essential for early detection, and (3) while surgery manages acute complications, timely chemotherapy remains curative. The case highlights the importance of maintaining high clinical suspicion for this treatable but potentially fatal malignancy in postpartum care.