Colonic Ulcers in a Patient Taking Low-Dose Aspirin

Hirofumi Hara^a Kaori Suzuki^b Yusuke Sekino^b Keiko Akimoto^b Ayako Tomimoto^b
Tomoyuki Akiyama^a Nobutaka Fujisawa^b Kumiko Saito^b Masahiko Inamori^a
Kensuke Kubota^a Atsushi Nakamura^b Satoru Saito^a Shigeru Koyama^b Atsushi Nakajima^a

^aGastroenterology Division, Yokohama City University School of Medicine, Yokohama, and

^bDepartment of Gastroenterology, Tokyo Metropolitan Hiroo Hospital, Tokyo, Japan

Dear Sir,

A 61-year-old man who was under treatment with low-dose aspirin for ischemic heart disease was admitted to our hospital because of bloody bowel discharge. His hemoglobin level was 10.6 g/dl (normal range: 11.3–14.5 g/dl) on admission. A colonoscopic examination revealed ulcers in the ascending colon (fig. 1). His symptom resolved with conservative therapy 2 weeks after admission.

Colonic side effects of low-dose aspirin are rare, but have increasingly been reported since the advent of colonoscopy. Most of these patients present with diarrhea and macro- or microscopic lower

gastrointestinal bleeding. The diagnosis is based on a history of low-dose aspirin use and the absence of other apparent causes of colonic ulceration. Colonic ulcers caused by low-dose aspirin usually run a benign course and have an excellent prognosis when managed conservatively; however, relapse may occur in patients re-challenged with low-dose aspirin (after previous withdrawal of the medication).

In conclusion, colonic ulceration is a rare but clinically important condition in patients taking low-dose aspirin.

Fig. 1. An endoscopic examination revealed ulcers in the ascending colon.