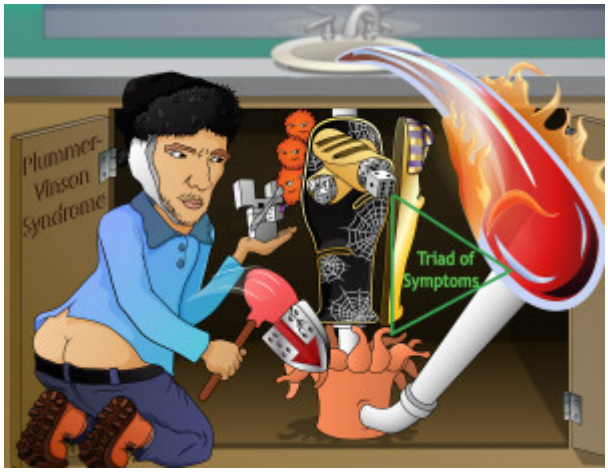
Plummer-Vinson Syndrome

Plummer-Vinson Syndrome which is characterized by the triad of iron deficiency anemia, dysphagia due to esophageal webs and glossitis classically affects caucasian females aged 30-60. This syndrome must be recognized early because it is a risk factor for squamous cell carcinoma of the esophagus.



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Triad of Symptoms

Dysphagia
Dice-fajita
Dysphagia, or trouble swallowing, occurs due to the development of esophageal webs. The dysphagia present in Plummer-Vinson syndrome is typically post-cricoid.

Esophageal Webs
Esophageal-sarcophagus Webs
Esophageal webs are thin membranes of submucosal and mucosal tissue which can protrude and obstruct the esophagus. This can lead to dysphagia.

Glossitis
Glass-tongue-on-fire
Glossitis, or inflammation of the tongue, is seen in Plummer-Vinson syndrome, and is often related to nutritional deficiencies. Patients typically display a sore, inflamed tongue. The tongue can be described as "red and shiny," due to inflammation and loss of the lingual papillae.

Iron Deficiency Anemia
Broken Iron and Anemone
Patients with Plummer-Vinson syndrome also have iron-deficient anemia as part of the symptomatic triad. Iron-deficient anemia is a microcytic, hypochromic anemia which usually occurs due to bleeding, increased demand in pregnancy, or poor nutrition.

Association

Squamous Cell Cancer of Esophagus
Square-mouse with Tumor-guy at Esophageal-sarcophagus
Patients with PVS display a higher risk of developing esophageal squamous cell cancer.

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