

Finding Romantic Images in Gynecological Pathology: Valentine Heart Shaped Uterus

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A 79-year-old patient presented to the Gynecology Clinic for pelvic pain at the beginning of February. Clinical and ultrasound examination revealed the presence of a large and partially cystic uterine mass. Macroscopic examination of the surgical specimen revealed the presence of a 13 cm diameter, heart shaped cystic mass involving the uterine corpus. On the cut surface, multiple polypoid areas of yellow color and soft consistency were partially infiltrating the myometrium and the uterine cervix. Microscopically, the lesion was diagnosed as FIGO grade 2 endometrioid adenocarcinoma of the uterus (Figure 1).

Each year on February 14th, many people around the world exchange cards, candy, gifts, flowers and enjoy romantic dinner with their special "valentine". This day of romance called Valentine's Day is named for a Christian martyr and dates back to the 5th century, but according to some modern sources it originates in the mid-February Roman holiday Lupercalia devoted to fertility and love.¹ The most common symbol of Valentine's day is a heart, particularly in red or pink.

In our case, the red heart shaped uterus was due to an endometrioid adenocarcinoma, the most common malignant tumor of the uterus.² This tumor is most of the times exophytic even when deeply invasive, and can be composed of separate polypoid masses, like in our case. Enlargement of the uterus usually occurs due to the myometrial invasion, and extension into the lower uterine segment is common, whereas involvement of the cervix occurs only in 20% of the cases. In our particular case, the tumor infiltrated the lower uterine and the cervical segment, producing the obstruction of the latter, which secondarily determined the cystic dilatation of the uterine cavity, reproducing the shape of a Valentine heart, a phenomenon that has never been previously reported in endometrial pathology.

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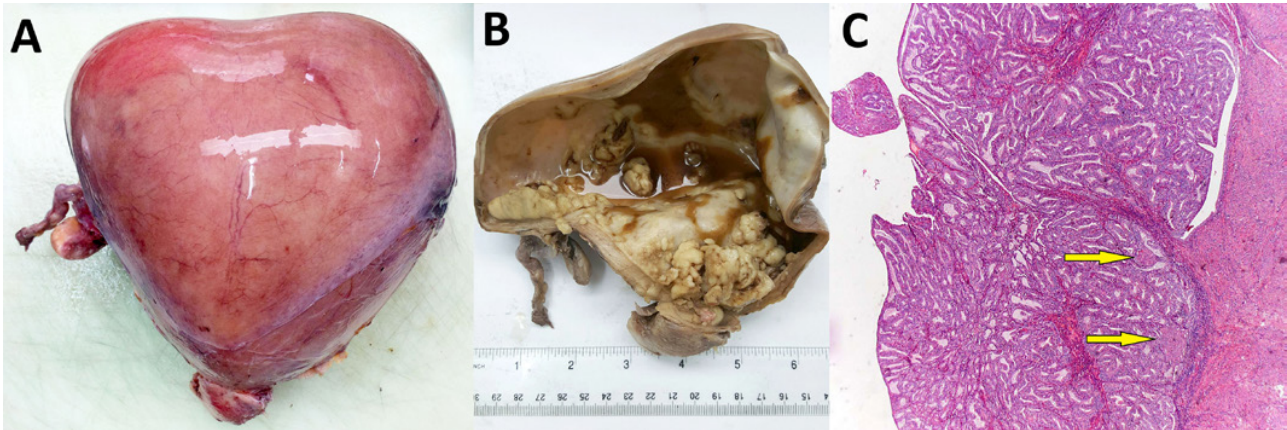


FIGURE 1. Heart shaped uterine corpus (A), due to a polypoid area of yellow color and soft consistency, partially infiltrating the myometrium and the uterine cervix (B) and microscopically represented by a proliferation of atypical glands infiltrating the endometrium and associated with morules (yellow arrow) (C).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nothing to declare.

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