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Usefulness of Methylcellulose (MC) in Barium Suspension for Oral Contrast Medium in CT Examination

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We tested MC in barium suspension for the evaluation of the gastrointestinal tract on CT examination.

A total of 30 subjects who underwent CT with use of 900 ml of MC in barium suspension (1.5% weight/volume) were included for the study.

Another 30 subjects who ingested the same amount of commercially available oral contrast medium (1.5% weight/volume barium suspension) without the use of MC were also included as a control group.

Five radiologists attended to analyze the quality of contrast with regard to the CT Hounsfield number, homogeneity, frequency of layering effect and artifacts, transit time to the colon, and luminal diameter of the bowel loops.

It was agreed that the group using MC in barium suspension showed higher CT attenuation and was more homogeneous than the control group.

The frequency of layering effect and beam-hardening artifact was lower in the group of MC in barium suspension than the control group ;

15% versus 32% and 13% versus 56%, respectively.

No difference was noted between two groups in both the rate of transit to the colon and the mean luminal diameter of the intestinal loops.

Use of MC in preparing the barium suspension for CT oral contrast medium improves the image quality of the gastrointestinal tract on CT.

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