

## Challenging diagnosis of ileal gastrointestinal stromal tumor presenting with obscure digestive bleeding

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### ABSTRACT

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We report a case of a patient observed in emergency condition for recurrent episodes of massive obscure gastrointestinal bleeding that required surgical control. At laparotomy we found an ileal mass with the characteristics of a gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST) at histopathological analysis. GISTs should always be considered as a possible cause of obscure gastrointestinal bleeding, although they are often difficult to diagnose preoperatively. Laparotomy is sometimes the only way to obtain a diagnosis. Starting from this case, we reviewed the literature about GISTs, focusing our attention on their diagnosis and the possible surgical and nonsurgical therapies.

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**Key words:** gastrointestinal stromal tumor, obscure digestive bleeding, diagnostic laparotomy, imatinib.

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