# Human Tail- A Case Report On Rare Entity

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**ABSTRACT**

Human tails are a rare entity.They are usually classified as true and pseudo tails.We present a case of 8 year old child who presented with a tail in the intergluteal region measuring 20cm in length and 2 cm in diameter. MRI spine revealed tethering of the spinal cord with posterior epidural lipoma and open spina bifida at level S2 and was reported as lipomyelocele with tail like appendage. Patient underwent surgical excision of the lesion and histopathologicalexamination revealed a lipomatous lesion. post- op period was uneventful.

**Key words**: Human Tail, Lipoma, Spinal Dysraphism.

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## INTRODUCTION

The birth of a child with tail causes severe mental stress to the parents and also considered as a social stigma. They are usually classified as true and pseudo tails1.Tails are usually associated with occult spinal dysraphism2.

## CASE REPORT

We present a case of 8 year old boy who presented with a tail in the intergluteal region measuring 20 cm in length and 2 cm in diameter. He had no neurological deficits on clinical examination. MRI spine showed tethering of the spinal cord with posterior epidural lipoma and open spina bifida. It was reported as lipomyelocele with tail like appendage. Patient underwent surgical excision of the lesion. Histopathological examination revealed a lipoma. Post-op period was uneventful. The patient did not have any neurological deficits.

## DISCUSSION

During the 5th to 6th week of intrauterine life, the human embryo has a tail with 10–12 vertebrae. By 8 weeks, the human tail disappears. The persistent tail probably arises from the distal nonvertebrate remnant of the embryonic tail3.True human tail arises from the most distal remnant of the embryonic tail. It contains adipose tissue, connective tissue, central bundles of striated muscle, blood vessels and nerves and is covered by skin. Bone, cartilage, notochord and spinal cord are lacking. It occurs twice as often in males as in females. It is rarely familial1.

Pseudo tails have got superficial resemblance to true tails. They are anomalous prolongation of the coccygeal vertebrae. Human tail usually occurs in the lumbosacral region, but it has also been reported in the cervical region4. About 50% of the cases reported of human tail were associated with either meningocele or spina bifida occulta5.

Recent publications have endeavoured to differentiate between the true, or vestigial tail, and the pseudotail by clinical and pathological examination, and have indicated the benign nature of the true tail6.Teratomas have also been reported in human tails7.Management of such lesions must include complete neurological history and examination as well as magnetic resonance or computed tomographic imaging. After diagnosis, microsurgery should be performed if there is any intraspinal component to avoid any damage and neurological deficit.

## CONCLUSION

Human tail is a rare condition. It is important to differentiate between true tail and pseudo tail as true tail is usually associated with neurological deficits and bladder and bowel incontenence. Safe surgical excision is the treatment of choice for human tail. People with human tail are still worshiped in our the society.

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