

Confusing-calcemia:

Hypocalcemia as one of the Many Guises of Pernicious Anemia

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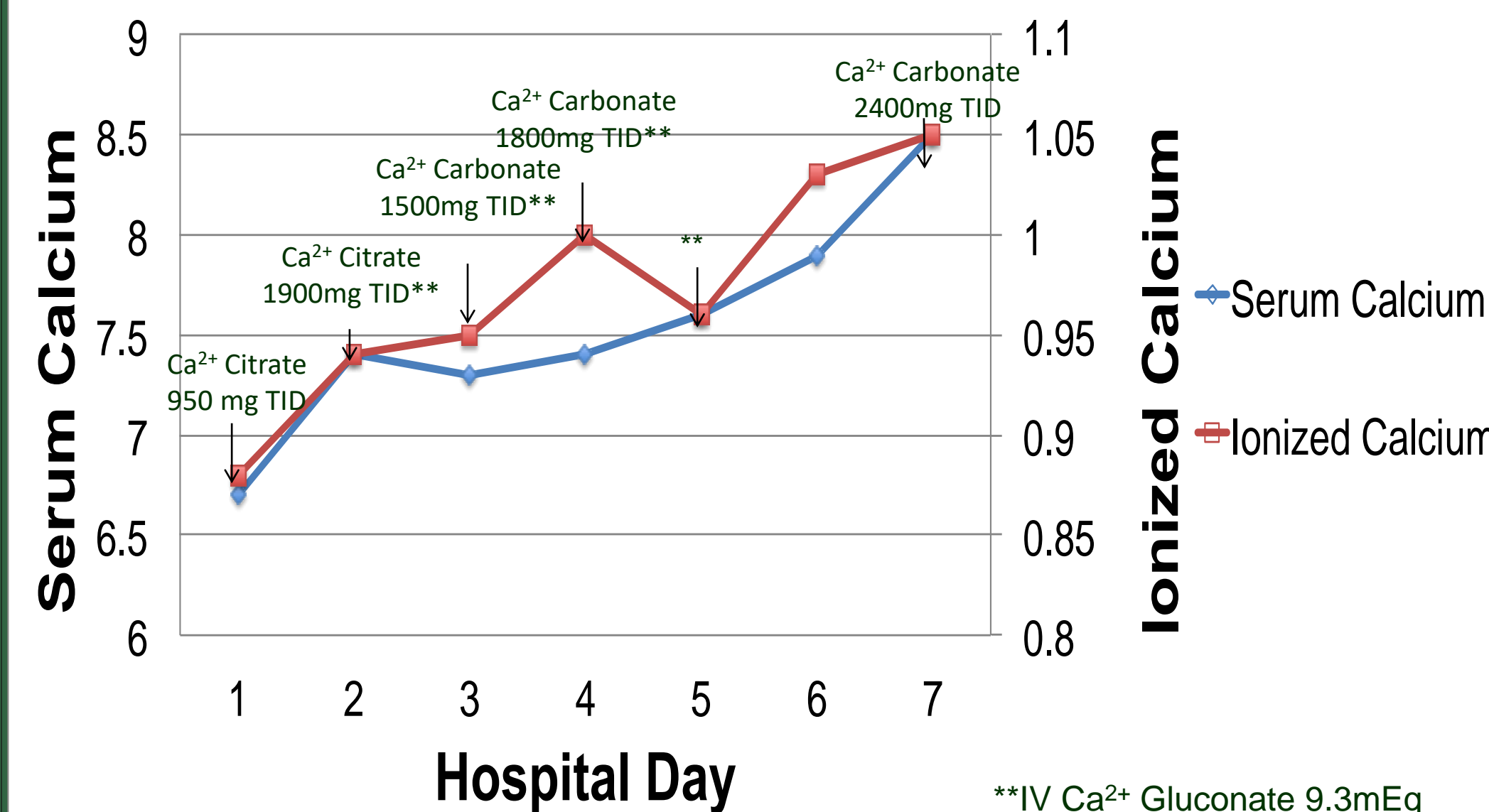
Learning Objectives

- List causes of hypocalcemia
- Formulate a workup for refractory hypocalcemia

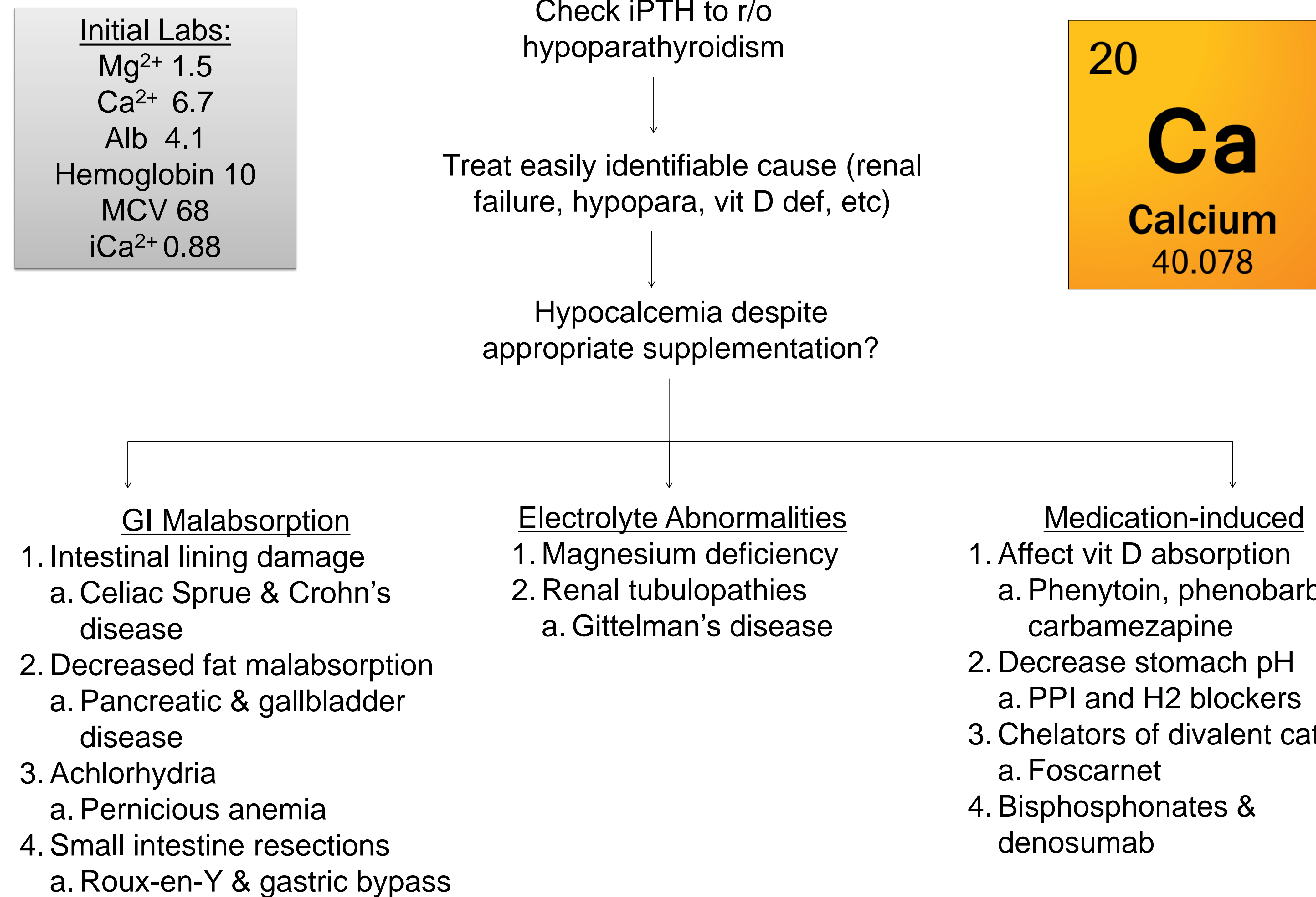
Case Presentation

44 year old Caucasian female with Graves' disease

- 1-year history of refractory hypocalcemia post-thyroidectomy and inadvertent parathyroidectomy
- Acral numbness and tingling, tetany of upper extremities, and new-onset seizures
- Compliant with teriparatide SC 100 mcg, calcitriol PO 1 mcg TID, and calcium carbonate PO 1000mg TID
- Physical Exam: positive Chvostek and Trousseau sign. Otherwise normal.



Proposed Algorithm for Refractory Hypocalcemia



Malabsorption Work Up Results

EGD with Duodenal Biopsies	Negative
Anti-Transglutaminase Antibody	Negative
Intrinsic Factor Antibody	Positive
Anti-Parietal Cell Antibody	73.4 (normal <20)
Vitamin B12 Level	212 pg/mL (normal 211-911 pg/mL)
Ferritin, Iron Level, TIBC	5 ng/mL (low), 18 mcg/dL(low), 449
Gastrin Level	1264 pg/mL (normal 13-154 pg/mL)

Take Home Points

- Ensure compliance with vitamin D and calcium supplementation in patients with hypoparathyroidism
- Explore other etiologies exacerbating hypocalcemia in symptomatic patients on appropriate supplements
- Consider pernicious anemia in patients with refractory hypocalcemia
- Recall that pernicious anemia can have varied presentations

Selected References

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