A 49-year-old female presented to the hospital with abdominal pain and emesis. A computed tomography (CT) scan revealed a small-bowel obstruction and a right ovarian mass measuring 4.6 cm. Following oophorectomy, histopathology revealed a mature cystic teratoma with multiple foci of benign thyroid tissue, as well as a 0.9 cm focus of follicular variant papillary thyroid cancer (Figs. 1 and 2) surrounded by normal ovarian tissue (Fig. 3). Thyroid ultrasound and serum thyroid function tests were normal. A $^{131}$I diagnostic whole body scan (WBS) did not reveal any abnormal uptake in the abdomen or pelvis, and an abdominal CT was normal. A high-dose (423 $\mu$Ci) $^{123}$I WBS performed 6 months later was also negative. Based on the small size of the primary carcinoma and the lack of evidence of metastases on imaging, the patient received no further treatment.

Differentiated thyroid cancer (DTC) arising from ovarian teratomas is a rare occurrence, with an estimated incidence...
of 0.1–0.3% (1,2). Most cancers are found incidentally on histopathology. DTCs arising from ovarian teratomas can occasionally present with locally invasive disease or with distant metastases, and may be associated with recurrences in some patients (2). Following surgical resection of the lesion, the need for further therapy, including total thyroidectomy and radioiodine ablation, is based on the extent of the primary lesion and the evidence of persistent or metastatic disease by imaging. There is very little data on the natural history or prognosis of papillary microcarcinomas of ovarian origin. Given the similarity of their histological appearance to those arising in the thyroid, a generally favorable prognosis is anticipated.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Drs. Robert Summe and David J. Eisenstein who participated in the care of this patient.

References


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FIG. 3. Normal ovarian tissue from the same ovary. Note the presence of normal ovarian stromal cells and blood vessels.