

Letter to the Editor

Ingestion of Multiple Foreign Bodies in search of Diabolical Power

Madam, Foreign bodies may get impacted along the G.I. tract due to their large size or irregular shape and this usually occurs in the esophagus, proximal to the pylorus or at illeocaecal junction. The commonest impacted foreign body is the coin currency.¹⁻³ Adults often accidentally swallow foreign bodies like dentures, fish bone and tooth brush.⁴

Ingestion of multiple radio-opaque and radio-lucent foreign bodies is rare. We report the case of a 40 year old driver who presented with epigastric pain and easy satiety of 3 years duration following the ingestion of some foreign bodies in a bid to acquire some diabolic powers. He claimed that a native doctor had asked him to swallow the following foreign bodies: 25 cm long tooth brush, four 6 inches nails, one needle, one lead pencil, a pen knife, a 10.00 note and a bundle of charm of about 6cm diameter. He swallowed the foreign bodies over a period of about three hours after which he noticed some epigastric discomfort which got

progressively worse until he presented three years later.

He was non-smoker, drinker nor habitual user of any other dangerous drug. He had previous history of serious medical or surgical treatment. Abdominal x-ray revealed multiple radio-opaque shadows in the upper half of the abdomen (Figure). At laparotomy the stomach was hypertrophic and distended. There was gross ascites and the stomach contained four 6 inches nails, one long needle, one lead pencil, one tooth brush and a roll of charm. The foreign bodies were removed.

References

1. Hawkins DB. Removal of blunt foreign bodies from esophagus. *Ann Otol Rhinol Laryngol* 1999;9:684-8.
2. Holinger LD. Management of sharp and penetrating foreign bodies of the upper digestive tract. *Ann Otol rhinol Laryngol* 1990;99:684-8.
3. Elusoji SO, Tabowel BI. Fatal haematemesis due to impacted foreign body in the esophagus. *J Pak Med Assoc* 1993;43:39-40.
4. Bodoie EA, Archampong EO, Jaja MO. Foreign bodies in the oesophagus in principles and practice of surgery including pathology in the tropics. Ghana Publishing Corporation 1986, pp. 136-7.

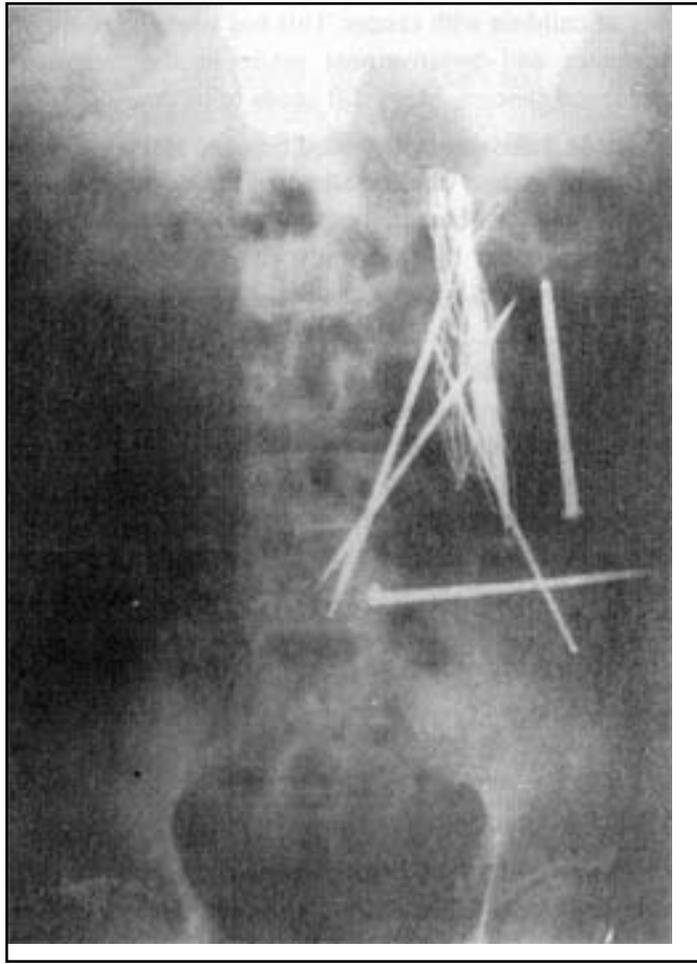


Figure: Multiple Radio-opaque foreign bodies in the plain abdominal x ray of the patient

S.O. Elusoji, S. Momoh

Department of Surgery and Pathology
School of Medicine, University of Benin, Benin
City, EDO State, Nigeria.