

A SUICIDE ATTEMPT BY INGESTION OF CYLINDRICAL BATTERIES

Kalem pilleri yutarak yapılan bir suicid girişimi

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ABSTRACT

Ingestion of foreign bodies like batteries is a common health issue during childhood. Foreign body ingestions may also be encountered in adults. We aimed to present an 83-year-old female patient who attempted to commit suicide by ingesting batteries. She was admitted to our emergency department after ingestion of 3 AAA type batteries of a TV remote control for suicidal purpose. She had no history of a psychiatric illness. Her x-rays were taken, the former showing 3 AAA type batteries in stomach. The patient was applied urgent endoscopy. Three slim batteries were visualized in the gastric corpus. The batteries were removed with the help of a snare with overtube. It should be remembered that adult patients may also present to an emergency department after ingesting foreign materials like batteries. These patients should be thoroughly questioned and assessed with regard to underlying neuropsychiatric disorders as well as alcohol and drug abuse.

Key words: Foreign body, geriatric patient, and swallowing.

ÖZET

Pil gibi bir yabancı cisim yutma, özellikle çocuklarda yaygın görülen bir problemdir. Yabancı cisim yutma ayrıca erişkinlerde de gözlenebilmektedir. Bu yazıda uzaktan kumandanın pillerini yutarak intihara teşebbüs eden 83 yaşında bir kadın hastayı sunmayı amaçladık. Hasta acil servisimize özkıyım amacıyla 3 adet AAA boyutunda pil yutması nedeniyle getirildi. Özgeçmişinde bilinen bir psikiyatrik hastalığı yoktu. Hastanın direkt grafileri çekildi. Akciğer grafisinde mide düzeyinde 3 adet AAA boyutta kalem pil saptadık. Hasta acil endoskopiye alındı. Midenin korpusunda üç adet ince kalem pil görüldü. Piller overtube-fileli snare yardımı ile çıkarıldı. Acil servise çocuk yaş grubu dışında erişkin hastaların da pil benzeri yabancı cisim yutma nedeniyle başvurabileceği akılda tutulmalıdır. Bu hastalar altta yatan nöropsikiyatrik hastalıklar, alkol ve ilaç kötüye kullanımı yönünden de dikkatli biçimde incelenmelidir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Geriatrik hasta, yabancı cisim ve yutma.

INTRODUCTION

Ingestion of foreign bodies like batteries is a common health issue during childhood. Batteries with a diameter smaller than 20 mm usually pass through the upper gastrointestinal system and are excreted in feces. Larger foreign bodies, on the other hand, may give rise to severe esophageal injury. The electrochemical properties of batteries are responsible

for their corrosive effects. A battery's acid content is resolved within the gastrointestinal mucosa, causing coagulation necrosis (1, 2). Heavy metal toxicity may also theoretically occur (3).

Foreign body ingestions may also be encountered in adults with psychiatric disorders (4). This report aimed to present a female patient who

attempted to commit suicide by ingesting batteries of a TV remote control.

Case

A 83-year-old woman was admitted to our emergency department after ingestion of 3 AAA type batteries of a TV remote control for suicidal purpose 25 minutes ago. Her past history was notable for diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and hyperlipidemia but no history of a psychiatric illness. Her general condition was stable and vital signs were normal on admission. Her laboratory examinations revealed the following: hemoglobin 11.8 g/dL, leucocyte count 13500 / μ L, platelet count 368000/ μ L, BUN 14 mg/dL, creatinine 0.88 mg/dL, sodium 138 mmol/L, and potassium 4.2 mmol/L. Her posteroanterior chest and abdominal x-rays were taken, the former showing

3 AAA type batteries in stomach (Figure 1). The patient was applied urgent endoscopy, which showed a 3-4 cm laceration at the lower end of esophagus. Three slim batteries were visualized in the gastric corpus (Figure 1). The gastric mucosa around the batteries was edematous, erythematous, and stained with hematin; a superficial ulcer was also observed. The batteries were removed with the help of a snare with overtube. A piece of paper at the bulbous of duodenum was also removed using the snare. The patient's overall hemodynamic condition and clinical course were stable after the procedure. A psychiatry consultation was obtained during hospital stay. However, the patient and her relatives refused all further management efforts and left the emergency department at their own risk.

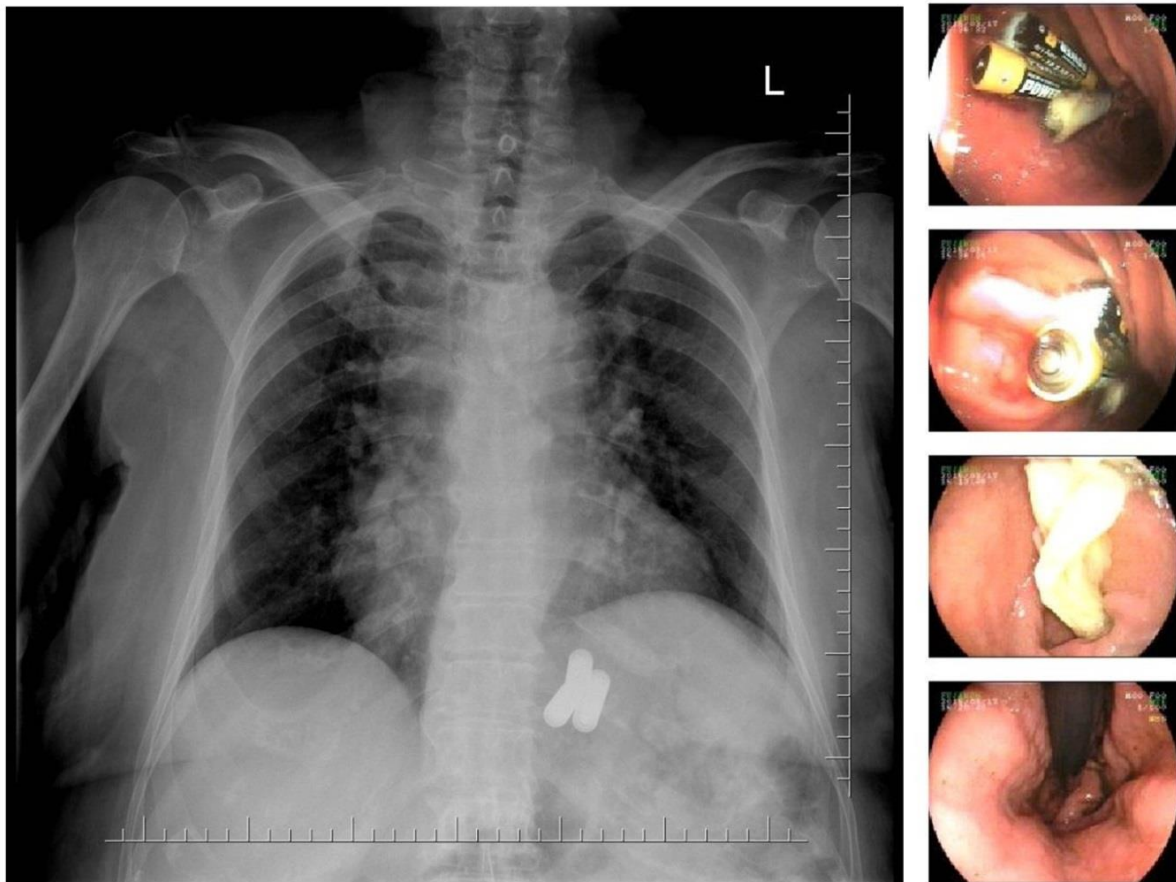


Figure 1: Radiographic view of 3 AAA type batteries at the level of stomach and endoscopic views of the batteries.

DISCUSSION

Foreign body ingestion during adulthood are rare, usually occurring as a result of comorbidities such as mental retardation, psychiatric disorders, pica, or alcohol abuse (4-6). Gastrointestinal passage of a foreign body depends on its length and diameter. It has been reported that 80% of all ingested foreign materials are discharged in feces without causing any noticeable symptoms. The remaining 20%, on the other hand, require endoscop-

ic intervention (7). We diagnosed battery ingestion using a chest X-Ray and determined that the batteries were located to stomach. The length of these standard AAA type batteries is 44.5mm and diameter 10.5 mm. Normally, it might be reasonable to wait for gastrointestinal passage of a single battery of this size that had already advanced past the esophagus. However, as the patient ingested three batteries at a time, and her psychiatric condition would pose a risk during follow-up of gastrointesti-

nal passage, we opted to perform an urgent endoscopic intervention. We also started a proton pump inhibitor following the removal of the batteries.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that adult patients may also present to an emergency department after ingesting foreign materials like batteries. These patients should be thoroughly questioned and assessed with regard to underlying neuropsychiatric disorders as well as alcohol and drug abuse.

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