

## WRIST WATCH: AN UNUSUAL FOREIGN BODY ESOPHAGUS

Kamran Iqbal, Maqbool Ahmad Baloch, Zeeshan Khakwani

Department of ENT, Gomal Medical College, D.I.Khan, Pakistan

### ABSTRACT

Foreign bodies obstructing upper esophagus are common emergency presentations to ENT units and extreme of ages are prone to acquire it. We describe here a child who ingested a wrist watch devoid of straps, obstructing her esophagus and causing dysphagia and she even forgot that she had ingested a wrist watch.

**KEY WORDS:** Foreign body, Oesophagus, Dysphagia, Wrist watch.

### INTRODUCTION

Foreign bodies obstructing ear, nose and throat are very common in our setup and sometimes due to delay in consultation or mismanagement may become a source of prolonged morbidity.

Our patient was 5 years old girl from Zhob, Baluchistan. She developed dysphagia and fever and was considered to be a case of respiratory tract infection and received treatment for it for more than 3 weeks but the symptoms worsened as the time went by and after about 40 days, when she was referred to ENT Department, DHQ Teaching Hospital, Dera Ismail Khan, she was unable to swallow her own saliva, had dysphagia and upper respiratory tract infection with fever.

Upon x-ray of the neck, there was a radio-opaque shadow at the cervico-thoracic junction of esophagus. On taking x-rays from different

angles, it was confirmed to be a metallic wrist watch without straps. (Figure 1)

After this finding she was asked about the wrist watch and much to our surprise she could not remember that she ingested a wrist watch. Even her parents could not remember anything about the wrist watch incident.

It was concluded that the little girl accidentally ingested the wrist watch and somehow forgot it. The wrist watch got stuck in her esophagus and due to pressure of it and the consequent edema, she developed dysphagia. Later on due to superimposed bacterial infection, she developed fever.

She was admitted, rehydrated and antibiotic cover was given. Steroids were administered to decrease the edema. When fever subsided, the foreign body was removed under general anesthesia.

Patient improved well and her dysphagia was cured.

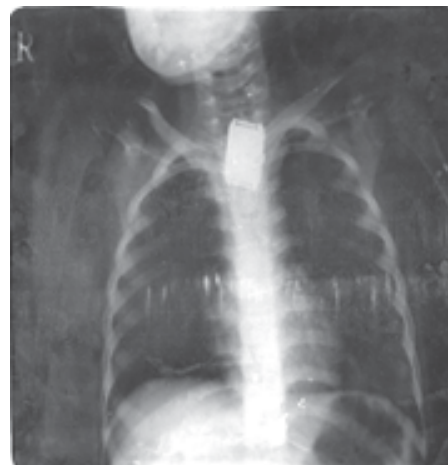
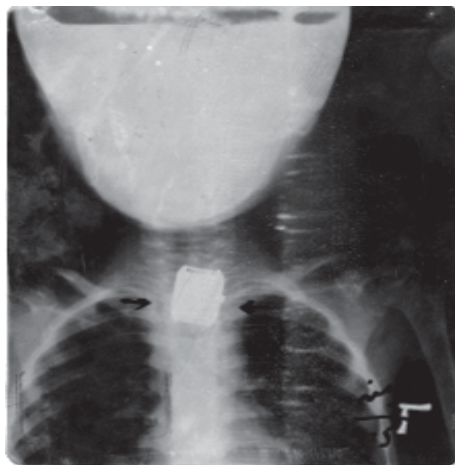


Fig. 1: Chest x-ray showing radio-opaque foreign body in the upper oesophagus.



Fig. 2: The picture of the girl and the wrist watch recovered.

## DISCUSSION

Self inserted or ingested foreign bodies in esophagus are quite common in pediatric age group.<sup>1,2</sup> Reason being the curiosity or playing out of habit. Dentition is also incomplete posteriorly and deglutition mechanism is also under development in such patients which makes them prone to the foreign body ingestion.<sup>3</sup>

In adults, such cases have been reported to be associated with psychiatric illnesses like schizophrenia and psychiatric evaluation becomes a necessary step in further management of such patients.<sup>4,5</sup>

Autism is also a childhood psychiatric disorder which should also be ruled out in patients who report to ENT emergencies multiple times.<sup>4</sup> Autistic children have low IQ and are mentally challenged, so the care takers should be properly educated about such hazards and preventive measures be taken to prevent such morbidities.<sup>6</sup>

The wrist watches are usually operated by mercury batteries, which can also become a serious hazard if leaked while lodged in esophagus.<sup>7</sup> Size and the metallic casing of the watch itself can lead to perforation and infection.

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## Corresponding author:

Dr. Maqbool Ahmed Baloch  
Senior Registrar  
ENT Department  
DHQ Teaching Hospital  
D.I.Khan, Pakistan  
E-mail: maqbaloch2002@yahoo.com