A Retained Rectosigmoid Foreign Body: Unusual Presentation

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Abstract A variety of foreign bodies have been inserted in to the rectum for autoeroticism. However, their presence inside the bowel lumen for prolong period might not produce serious harm to the host, and discovery of such object during evaluation of rectal symptoms is not a surprise. Here we describe a 64-year-old male patient presented with rectal symptoms, and a rectosigmoid foreign body was discovered after 35 days of self-insertion. No serious life threatening events occurred during this period. This was easily removed by trans-anal approach under anesthesia.

Keywords Rectosigmoid foreign body · Unusual

Introduction

Rectal foreign body is a rare, but not an uncommon entity described in medical literature. A variety of foreign bodies irrespective of their nature and size have been inserted per-rectum for autoeroticism. Sometimes these get stuck in rectum and lead to serious life threatening condition like peritonitis. On the contrary, impaction of foreign body might produce minimal symptoms or be entirely asymptomatic. Therefore, to avoid social embarrassment, medical advice is not sought for prolong period. Here we describe a case of

rectosigmoid foreign body presenting 35 days after insertion.

Case Report

A 60-year-old male presented to outpatient clinic with history of constipation and rectal discomfort for last 35 days. Occasionally, he used to pass small amounts of mucous and liquid stool. There was no history of abdominal distention or vomiting. He had lost 12 kg of weight in this period. System review was unremarkable. Digital rectal examination and proctoscopy revealed a plastic cylinder impacted in the upper rectum and a very lax anal sphincter. Abdomen was soft, not distended, non-tender, but a vague mobile lump was felt in the left sub-costal area. At this stage, direct interrogation revealed that he had introduced the entire length of a plastic sprinkler through the rectum for sexual pleasure 35 days ago. While attempting to remove the sprinkler by grasping the piston, the shell of the sprinkler remained inside while the piston came out. He was afraid that this might lead to bowel obstruction and was subsisting on small amounts of curd and water during this period. Abdominal x-ray demonstrated the foreign body extending from pelvic cavity to left sub-costal area with its tapered tip lying in the left upper quadrant, which was clinically palpable (Fig. 1). He was taken up for examination under anesthesia and the sprinkler was easily extracted by a swab holding forceps introduced per-rectum. The length and diameter of object were 27.5 cm and 3.2 cm respectively (Fig. 2). Post-operative period was uneventful

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Fig. 1 Erect abdominal x-ray showing the sprinkler extending from pelvis to left costal area

and he was discharged on the following day. He refused psychiatric consultation and did not come back for further follow up.

Discussion

A number of self-inserted foreign bodies have found their way into the rectum for autoeroticism. Plastic and glass bottle, cucumber, carrots, banana, wooden stick, sexual devices, candle, ball and so many have been described in literature [1]. Most of the times, these are reasonably shorter and smaller. However, deliberate insertion of such a long item in the rectum is a rare event. Busch DB and Starling JR reported retrieval of two foreign bodies from the rectum measuring 3×17 cm and 4×20 cm body spray and rubber dildo respectively [1]. Most of the patients come to a doctor within few days after insertion, when attempts at self-retrieval have failed or when complicated by intestinal perforation [2, 3, 4]. On the other hand, patient may present with anal symptoms only, suppressing the original fact [5]. Exceptionally, because of minimal symptoms, patients may

Fig. 2 The sprinkler after extraction

not seek medical advice for the fear of social disclosure and therefore, present late, as was the case in this patient. Although, this patient had harbored such a long impacted foreign body more than a month, he did not suffer major sequel of it. Similarly, Buzzard AJ and Waxman BP had reported the extraction of a foreign body in a 64-year-old man, 6 months after the incident, without any consequences [6]. A variety of unstandardized retrieval techniques have been reported in literature, but majority of retained foreign bodies could be extracted by simple trans-anal approach under anaesthesia [7].

Rectosigmoid foreign body may reside inside the bowel for prolong period without causing life-threatening events. They should be suspected in patients presenting with suspicious rectal symptoms.

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