Images in medicine

An unusual aspiration

A 53-year-old man was hitting nails into a wall. He almost fell of the stepladder on which he was standing, while holding nails in his mouth and aspirated one of these. He started to cough and became dyspnoeic for a few minutes. Two hours later he was admitted to hospital. A chest radiograph showed a nail 4.5 cm long in the bronchus of the lower lobe of the left lung which was confirmed during a flexible bronchoscopy. During this procedure the nail was removed and transported to the larynx. Subsequently, the nail was lost in the larynx traject and the patient swallowed it.

A radiograph of the abdomen showed that the nail was located in the stomach. A gastroscopy was performed immediately, but no corpus alienum was found. The patient was treated with laxantia and 3 days later a control radiography showed the abdomen to be clear.

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Figure 1

Figure 2