Utility of Fiber Optic Bronchoscopy for Retrieval of Aspirated Headscarf Pins

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Abstract

Background: Tracheobronchial foreign body aspiration is a worldwide health problem which often results in life threatening complications. Headscarf pin aspiration is a common and unique form of foreign body aspiration among young Iraqi Muslim women. It commonly occurs when women hold the pins in their teeth while wearing the hejaab and talking to others at the same time. Rigid bronchoscopy is considered the standard procedure for retrieval. Standard flexible bronchoscopy is now used increasingly in the treatment of tracheobronchial headscarf pins aspiration in adults.

Aim: The aim of this study is to evaluate the utility (use) of standard flexible bronchoscopy for the retrieval (extraction) of aspirated headscarf pins.

Materials and Methods: Patients with the diagnosis of headscarf pin aspiration admitted to Sulaimanyah Teaching Hospital, Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery, from January 2008 to September 2011 were included in the present study. Standard flexible bronchoscopy procedure using an oral approach with patient in recumbent position, under local anesthesia and conscious sedation was performed as the primary tool for retrieval.

Results: A total of 20 cases were included in this study. The mean age of the sample was 24 years with a range of 10-40 years. All patients presented with cough while two of them with hemoptysis (10%) and five had unilateral wheezes on chest auscultation (25%). The aspirated pin was successfully retrieved in 19/20 cases (95%) during the first attempt of standard flexible bronchoscopy procedure. However, this procedure was not successful in only one case out of 20 cases admitted (5%). The aspirated pin was successfully retrieved by rigid bronchoscopy under general anesthesia.

Conclusions: Standard flexible bronchoscopy is a safe and successful method when performed by an experienced bronchoscopist, well educated staff, and at a well equipped bronchoscopy unit.

Key Words: fiber optic bronchoscopy, headscarf pin aspiration