

Hide And Seek: A Case Report On Foreign Body Over Foot

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INTRODUCTION:

The foot is considered one of the common locations of foreign bodies. Although metallic foreign bodies are readily seen on plain radiograph, radiolucent bodies such as wood are visualized poorly, if at all. Plain radiography is known to be ineffective in demonstrating radiolucent foreign body, but it is the initial imaging modality that will be used. In such cases, other imaging modalities should be considered. In this case report, we would like to highlight that ultrasound is a simple and effective tool to detect the foreign body.

REPORT:

39 years old healthy lady presented with right foot swelling on and off for the past 6 months. She has history of pricked by toothpick over right foot 1st web space 6 months ago, claimed to have removed it immediately. Since then, she has been having these symptoms to which she has visited many medical practitioners and given antibiotics. The swelling partially responds to antibiotics but will recur back after some time. There is no fever or any other systemic symptoms. On examination, there is a swelling over right forefoot and punctum with serous discharge from 1st web space. No surrounding erythema, pus discharge or necrotic patch noted.

Plain radiograph showed no abnormalities. On ultrasound there is 2cm tubular foreign body noted below right great toe. She was then scheduled for wound debridement and foreign body removal. Retained piece of toothpick removed and subsequently patient was well with good wound healing.

Figure 1: Plain radiograph of right foot AP and Oblique view: no foreign body seen, no abnormalities.



Figure 2: Ultrasound right foot: 2cm tubular object visualized at base of right great toe.

CONCLUSION:

The detection and removal of a foreign body in soft tissue is a common problem. It is further complicated when the foreign body is radiolucent and embedded in deep layers of foot. In this case report, we would like to highlight that ultrasound is a simple and effective tool to detect the foreign body. Choosing appropriate imaging modality and knowing its strength and weakness allow us to arrive at accurate diagnosis and offer better treatment to the patient.

REFERENCES:

1. Kobs, J K; Hansen, A R; Keefe, B A retained wooden foreign body in the foot detected by ultrasonography. A case report., The Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery: Feb 1992 - Volume 74 - Issue 2 - p 296-298