
Meat Impacted in the Throat of 56 Year Old Patient! A Case Report.

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ABSTRACT: The dietary requirement of everyone is a delicate balance of all the macro and micro nutrient elements that a body needs so as to be healthy. These numerous elements and minerals are found adequately in different food lines that are consumed. The African continent is richly endowed with numerous types of food materials, many that are grown seasonally by our numerous subsistent farmers. Apart from these, there are various types of sources of protein that are either domesticated in our numerous villages and communities and by some larger farmers and these animals may include cow, goat, sheep, rams, fowls and duck fowls to name but a few. Ponmo or cattle hide is a local delicacy that can be used as a substitute for meat or eaten in combination with meat and other proteins in majorly Nigerian dishes. Meat is essential for body building, repairs, antibody generation, and overall health

This is a case report of a patient who swallowed ponmo(cattle hide) and it got impacted in his throat necessitating his visit to our facility.

KEYWORDS: meat, ponmo(cattle hide), swallowed, impaction, hyosine bromide.

INTRODUCTION

Food is an absolute requirement of the human population to keep the human bodies in good health, for repair, and maintenance of the skeletal wellbeing of the human race. These edible materials are found literally everywhere, with different species found in different geo-political regions of the nation. But ultimately, they are made available to the market for anybody who can and encourage to buy and consume as needed.

The nation is blessed with various sources of proteins and the cows are numerous nationally. The cow meat after slaughtering are usually totally skinned and the removed skin are prepared for sale to the leather industry markets, or mostly preferably to market women/men who readily sell them for human consumption. The local populace calls these edible skin 'ponmo', 'kander'. The ponmo is usually well cooked to make it soft and easy to chew and then swallowed. It is accepted as a local delicacy and is present in many different local eateries that are found in different parts of our communities. These eateries known in the local parlance as 'mama-put' serve these ponmo laced with ground pepper and other spices. They come out very tasty and hot. Imagine then, when this usually leather-thick skin of a cow was prepared, eaten, swallowed by a patient and then hung in his throat of the eater which could not be swallowed nor vomited.

This index patient had apparently indulged in this delicacy but unfortunately, the swallowed ponmo did not descend down well as it ought to. He apparently swallowed the soft piece of ponmo intact believing that it would descend but it did not and got stuck in his throat. He reportedly swallowed lots of plain water hoping that this practice would push down the stuck ponmo meat. He could not swallow the water as he repeatedly spat out the water. It was in this state that he reported to our facility where he was initially seen at the family medicine clinic and subsequently referred to the ear, nose and throat clinic for expert review and further management.

CASE REPORT

On one clear sunny day in a very busy family medicine clinic located in a tertiary hospital in the South-South geopolitical region of our nation, a patient came in to be reviewed.

The man reported that he had swallowed an intact piece of ponmo during his regular meal at a restaurant. He apparently had chewed the ponmo meat and had thought that he could swallow it but the piece got stuck in his throat and refused to progress further. He reported that he had slight pain on managing to swallow a small quantity of water.

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All efforts to make it go down into the stomach failed. He initially went to a local chemist shop where some unnamed medications was given to him, but to no avail. Apparently, he could not even swallow the unknown tablets. So, he then went to central hospital Sapele where an Xray of the neck was requested for. He was subsequently referred verbally to our facility for expert management. The physical findings revealed a middle-aged physically fit man (aged 56yrs), properly dressed and not in any respiratory distress. He was noted to be drooling saliva from the angles of his mouth, and he had a lidded container with him that he occasionally opened and spat non-offensive saliva from his mouth into. He was not having difficulty in breathing nor was he feverish, pale or dehydrated.

The presiding physician noticed that he had offensive mouth odour, but no foul discharges was noticed with a history of odynophagia and dysphagia. There was presence of pointing sign around the cricoid area.

Systemic examination revealed a normal system and a random blood sugar examination were essentially normal.

A working diagnosis of meat impaction was made and urgent investigations were ordered.

These included an urgent oesophagoscopy, FBC, E/u/cr, neck X-ray.

He was subsequently counselled for an urgent surgery to remove the foreign body in his throat. He accepted to all of the above but he had difficulties with his finance and could not pay for the investigations outlined for him. Also none of his relation had come with him to the hospital to get the prescribed material required for the surgical intervention.

In the view of the above, he was admitted into the facilities accident and emergency unit for observation pending when the relation would come and pay for the ordered investigations and procedures. He was placed on intravenous fluid 5% dextrose saline six hourly, intravenous paracetamol 600mg eight hourly, intramuscular hyosine bromide 20mg start, intravenous omeprazole 40mg start.

On review the following day, he had swallowed the meat (ponmo) and was no longer drooling saliva, he was now able to swallow his saliva effortlessly and his speech had also improved but he complained of pains in the throat.

He was discharged home and placed on tabs cefixime 400mg twice daily, tabs diclofenac potassium 500mg twice daily, tabs omeprazole 20mg twice daily and tabs vitamin c two tabs thrice daily all of a week's duration.

He was given a week appointment and follow up visits were uneventful. He was thereafter discharged from the clinic.

In summary was a 56year old man who was managed conservatively for meat(ponmo) impaction with good outcome.

The take home point is that meat impaction for an adult is rare and the fact that it was ponmo (cattle hide), which is a common delicacy enjoyed by Nigerians. Cattle hide and meat in general should be cut into tiny bits before swallowing. The muscle relaxing effect of hyosine bromide was used as the conservative management with good outcome.

DISCUSSION

It is uncommon for any foreign body to get impacted in the throat of an adult man except that there may be some pathological issues in the oesophagus of such a man. In the days when we had metallic coins in our nation, we had a lot of such coins getting impacted in the throat of young children who inadvertently swallow such coins when not supervised by an adult.¹

Children are often more prone to foreign body ingestion due to coin, various food particles, batteries and toy parts.² However, most swallowed foreign objects in the throat of an adult gets pushed down into the stomach and do not get lodged in the throat. These foreign bodies do not cause any complications.

There is usually no doubt that a patient has swallowed an article that had impacted in his throat, and the physical appearance of the patient usually portrays this unwanted development. The patient will present with complaints of; pains in the throat, or chest, sensation of a lump in his throat, difficulty swallowing anything subsequent to the impaction, excessive salivation, hiccups, coughing, chest pain, choking, foreign body sensation.² Furthermore, he may feel gagging sensation, and vomiting, blood stained saliva, drooling and spitting excessive salivation, coughing and wheezing and frightened appearance and odynophagia, out of fear he may lose his appetite.² If left untreated can result in oesophageal injury such as oesophagitis or ulceration, bowel obstruction from downstream migration of previously impacted items, oesophageal perforation or rupture.¹

The cause of most impaction is usually when one swallows an article that he had judged that he could swallow without problems, only to find out that he had mis-judged the size, shape and hardness of the article.

Foreign bodies impacted in the throat is usually a medical emergency that ought to be treated as soon as it is reported.³ Our patient wasted a day before reporting to our facility.

The commonest objects that get impacted in the throat of adult patients are food particles like meat, chicken, fish bones and foreign objects such as dentures, safety pins, hair clip.²⁻⁴

Food impaction in adults commonly occur in patients with underlying oesophageal motility disorder or known disorder such as stricture, neoplasma, diverticular, or in older adults/person with mental illness, or addicted to drugs and alcohol.^{3,5}

Sharp and pointed objects have the ability to cause perforation and haemorrhage and urgent removal is necessary to prevent further migration and injuries.³ about 30% of blunt or smooth foreign bodies can pass through the gastrointestinal tract without harming the patients.³

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A plain chest radiograph will identify the foreign body and its location. Conventional radiography may not detect complications like abscesses, perforation or fistula, some calcified objects might be difficult to identify, and therefore a computerised tomography scan will be more helpful in such cases.²

The recommendation for management for foreign body causing complete obstruction, sharp objects, batteries and magnet is an immediate therapeutic endoscopy with less than two hours to a maximum of six hours after ingestion.⁴ Urgent endoscopy should be performed for other oesophageal foreign bodies without complete obstruction within 24 hours after ingestion of the foreign body.⁴ Endoscopy may be delayed in the patients if he does not have signs of complete obstruction for spontaneous passage of food bolus.⁴

Although as a result of the index patients financial strain, a conservative management was instituted with the muscle relaxing effect of hyosine bromide adequately relaxing the neck muscles and soft tissues around the impacted ponmo. This aided his swallowing the meat and relieving him of his initial symptoms.

Dehaired cowhide meat is commonly known as ponmo, kanda in Nigeria which is tough to eat and requires an arduous process of cooking to tenderize it for human consumption.⁶⁻⁹

Ponmo is consumed by all tribes and regions in Nigeria, it is an essential delicacy and it features regularly, along with other types of meats, in classic traditional dishes.¹⁰ Ponmo can be used as an alternative to red meat.^{11,12} Consumption of ponmo in Nigeria is found across different societal classes and levels depending on financial strength and interest.¹³

There are three (3) types of processed ponmo which are white cowhide, brown cowhide and the dried cowhide. The white cowhide meat is processed by steam or soap shaving, while the brown cowhide meat is processed by singeing with wood, scrapped tyres and plastics, and kerosene. The names, white cowhide meat and brown cowhide meat, reflect their respective colours after processing.^{6,14} The dried cowhide is processed by singeing the cow skin with firewood, dehaired, boiled and afterwards then baked in the oven until pieces are curled and dried.¹⁴

Animal and meat products provide sustenance to humans due to their large reserve of micronutrients.¹⁵ Meat is essential for body building, repairs, antibody generation, and overall health.¹⁶ In a study where Brown cowhide meat, white cowhide meat, and Fresh cow meat were assessed for nutritional and contaminant composition (PCBs and metals), the percentage protein in brown cowhide meat and white cowhide meat were low, relative to fresh cow eat.¹⁴

CONCLUSION

Meat and meat products should be cut into tiny bits before placing in our mouth. Ethically, it is improper food etiquette to put big meat portions in our mouth. Ponmo should be properly tenderized before cooking to reduce its hardness. Food generally should be properly chewed before swallowing and we should not rush our meals.

The muscle relaxations effect of hyosine bromide cannot be over emphasized.

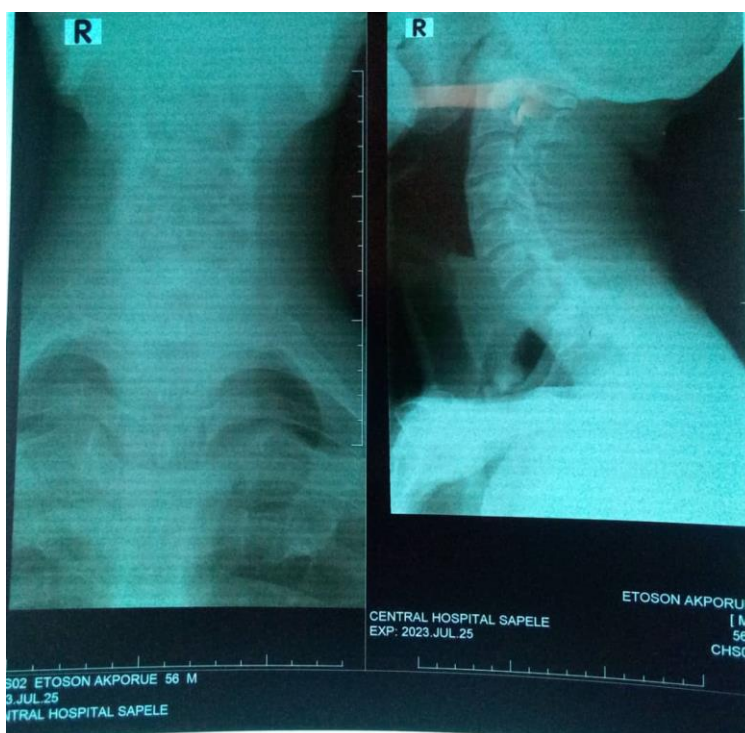


Figure 1 X-ray of the neck, AP and Lateral View

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