MANAGEMENT OF INTENTIONAL FOREIGN BODY INGESTION: EXPERIENCE FROM A UAE CENTRE

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A retrospective study of 49 episodes of intentional foreign body ingestion in 25 male prisoners found that most ingested objects, including sharp metallic items, passed spontaneously without complications and only one patient required surgical intervention.

KEY POINTS

- All 49 episodes occurred in male prisoners (median age 33 years) during a surge related to a prison pain medication policy change, and none presented with esophageal impaction
- Upper endoscopy was performed in 11 of 49 episodes based on ESGE guidelines, with 55% conducted after hours imposing significant service impact, but most objects were not within endoscopic reach at presentation
- Only one patient required surgery for a 9 cm sharp metallic object impacted at the ileocecal junction causing inflammation
- Timing of endoscopy showed no relationship with complications (perforation or obstruction, p=0.035) or length of stay (p=0.036), while length of stay was prolonged waiting for psychiatric evaluation (p=0.056)
- The authors suggest that most patients can be managed conservatively with watchful waiting, and middle-of-night endoscopy may be avoided except for esophageal impaction cases

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