

Clinical Image

Severe Abdominal Pain after Ingestion of a Large Number of Tablets

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A 52-year-old woman presented to the emergency department owing to severe upper abdominal pain. Two days before admission to the hospital, she swallowed 200 laxative tablets. She stated that she had regretted eating too much at dinner and hoped to defecate as soon as possible. The next day she suffered from diarrhea. However, this symptom resolved by the end of the day. On the day of her admission, she began to experience severe upper abdominal pain rather than diarrhea.

After performing imaging, a computed tomography (CT) scan revealed that her stomach was overfilled with undigested contents and was significantly dilated (Figure 1). Furthermore, a number of ingested tablets remained in her stomach, duodenum, and small intestine (Figure 1). These findings were determined to be the cause of her abdominal pain.



Figure 1: Coronal computed tomography image showing overfilled stomach and undigested tablets in the stomach, duodenum (arrows), and small intestine.

In this case, CT scan was a valuable method for investigation and very helpful to evaluate the medical conditions of the patient.