

INTRODUCTION

- Perforation of the small bowel occurs in less than 1% of all foreign body ingestions (FBI).
- Commonly occurs in children and the elderly, due to shared risk factors, including age and decreased cognitive function.
- The main purpose of blister pill packs is to prevent tampering and seal individual tablets for protection and safety against ultraviolet light. [Image 2]

CASE PRESENTATION

- An 86-year-old female presented with a chief complaint of abdominal pain. She rated the pain at an 8 out of 10. She noted that movement made the pain worse, and no activity made it better. She denied any hematochezia, melena, diarrhea, or constipation
- Initial Imaging included; CT ABD-Pelvis. CT scan revealed showcased in Image 1a.
- Subsequently, the patient was taken to the operating room, shown in Image 1b.
- Small bowel resection was completed successfully with anastomosis of the bowel. Patient had resumed diet with resumption of bowel movements within 10 days post-operation.

IMAGES / FIGURES



Image 1: Blister Pill Pack; an example of a pack which is used as preventative measure to protect medication from ultraviolet light.



Image 2: CT scan revealed a partial small bowel obstruction with dilated, fecalized small bowel proximal to the blister pack and non-distended small bowel distally

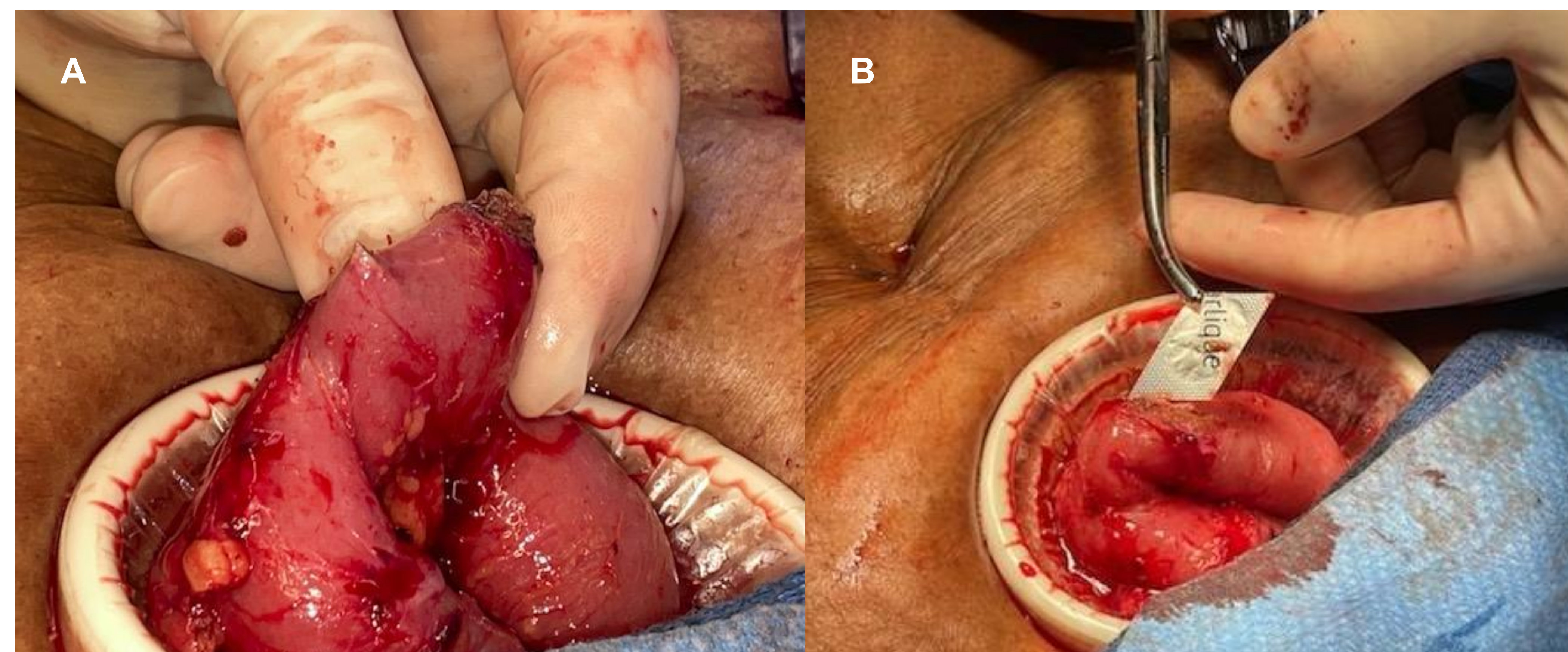


Image 3A and B: The blister pack was turned 180 degrees and found to be adherent to the right lower quadrant of the small bowel

DISCUSSION

- Foreign body ingestion is a common occurrence in children and elderly people. Most locations of impaction include the stomach and esophagus
- Rare effects of blister pack ingestion may include small bowel obstruction leading to perforation as seen in our case.
- Clinicians should be aware of a broad differential when considering ingestion of an unknown substance, including small bowel obstruction, perforation, or aspiration.
- Clinical judgment should be made when ingestion of a substance is on the differential. A thorough history and physical are of paramount importance, in addition to a multidetector CT and a multidisciplinary approach.

References

1. Obstruction and perforation of the small bowel caused by inadvertent ingestion of a blister pill pack in an elderly patient. Ghassan Al-Ramahi and Mohamed A Mohamed and Kristin Kennedy and Michael Mccann, BMJ Case Reports 2015
2. Tai AW, Sodickson A. Foreign body ingestion of blister pill pack causing small bowel obstruction. Emerg Radiol. 2007 Jun;14(2):105-8. doi: 10.1007/s10140-007-0582-4. Epub 2007 Mar 7. PMID: 17342467.