Rare as Hen’s Teeth: The unusual presentation of tooth nasal foreign body

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Discussion and Literature Review
Nasal foreign bodies, particularly in children, are a common ENT presentation. The nature of the foreign body can vary considerably, but a study by Cetinkaya et al found that hard spherical foreign bodies were the most common in paediatric cases, with the most common side and site being the right nasal cavity anterior to the middle turbinate [1].

While the majority present in the acute setting, they can also present later either as an incidental finding, as in this case, or as a consequence of symptoms such as an offensive discharge. This case appears to be the first reported example of an intranasal tooth foreign body following trauma. The offending tooth was successfully extracted (Fig. 2), and the child made an uneventful recovery.

On further questioning, her parent noted an oral injury in the past with loss of an upper tooth that was never recovered. According to our maxillofacial consultant colleague it was likely the deciduous tooth had impacted following the injury and displaced cranially towards the nasal cavity, and then presented later in the nasal cavity by further displacement as the permanent tooth started to develop.

References

Fig 1. Image demonstrating a solid white foreign body in the right nasal cavity arising from the inferior aspect

Fig 2. Image of the tooth foreign body after removal from the nasal cavity

Conclusion
While nasal foreign bodies commonly occur in the paediatric population, presentation of an intranasal tooth foreign body following trauma is an unusually rare occurrence. This case highlights the importance of exploring potential causes of foreign bodies, particularly with unknown objects or unclear history.

Case Presentation
A 2-year-old girl was found to have an incidental finding of an unknown, solid, right-sided nasal foreign body with no associated symptoms such as foul smelling discharge. Initial attempts at removal in both the emergency department and ENT outpatient were unsuccessful. She underwent a nasal examination under general anaesthetic, and was found to have a foreign body appearing to arise from the inferior aspect of the nasal cavity (Fig. 1). Intra-operatively it was confirmed to be a tooth, which was a highly unusual presentation. The offending tooth was successfully extracted (Fig. 2), and the child made an uneventful recovery.

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