



Burst of a Tooth in an Elderly Patient

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IMAJ 2003;5:686

An 85 year old man was hospitalized in our department because of severe bronchopneumonia. Due to respiratory failure he was intubated and ventilated artificially. Two weeks following intubation a tip of tooth was seen below the right side of his lower lip and a crusty ulcer on the left side. The patient had only two single teeth in his mandible. It seems that the tube pushed his mandible down so that both teeth pressed on the area below the lower lip, leading to the development of pressure sores through one of which (right) one tooth burst out [Figure 1]. Following tracheostomy the ulcers healed on both sides and the right tooth retained its original position, as seen in Figure 2.

Searching the English medical literature, we could not find any report of such a complication following an intubation. Physicians and nurses should be aware of this possibility in elderly patients requiring artificial ventilation and prone to develop pressure sores. Careful daily inspection of the



mouth together with regular mouth care should obviate such a complication.

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