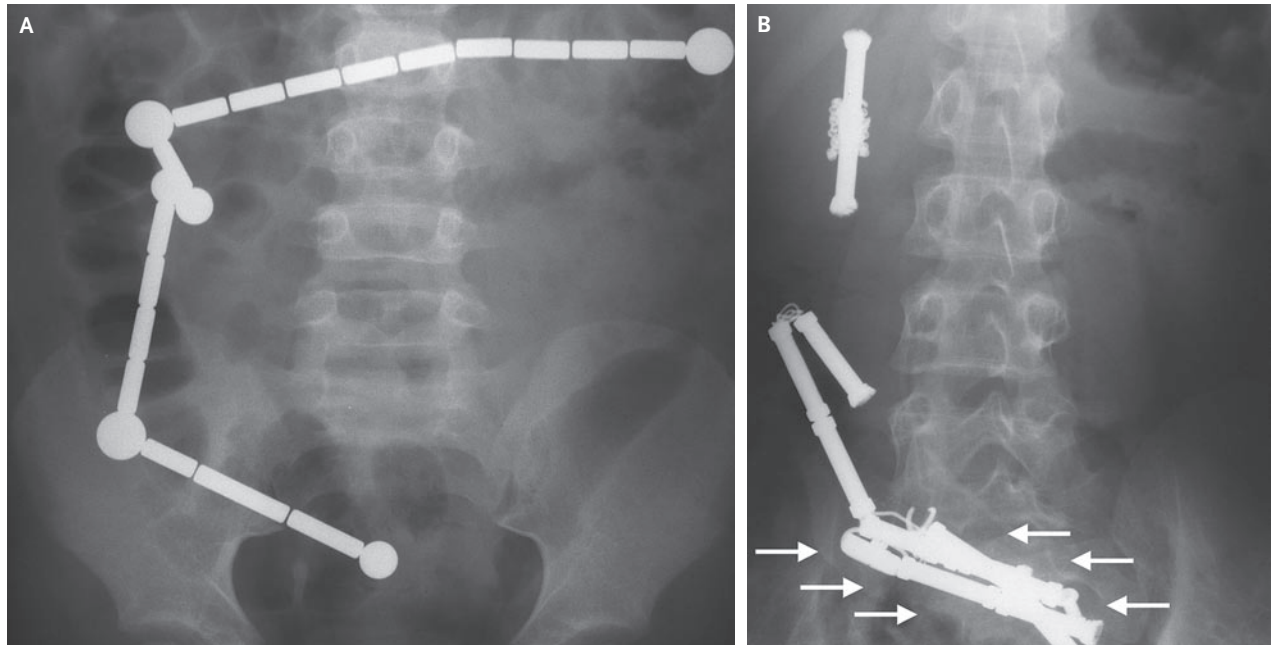


IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Ingested Magnets



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A 9-YEAR-OLD BOY INGESTED 23 MAGNETS (PANEL A). FOUR DAYS LATER, HE had clinical and surgical evidence of intestinal perforation and peritonitis due to pressure necrosis of the bowel. In an unrelated incident, a developmentally delayed 13-year-old boy ingested 15 magnets. Ten days later, volvulus and intestinal occlusion developed (Panel B, arrows). Both patients were operated on without complications, and all magnets were removed. Although ingested nonmagnetic foreign bodies are likely to be passed spontaneously without consequence, ingested magnets may attract each other through the intestinal wall and cause severe damage, such as pressure necrosis, perforation, intestinal fistulas, volvulus, and obstruction. Thus, close observation and early intervention are warranted after ingestion of magnets.

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