INTERNAL MEDICINE CASE STUDIES

Case 21: Gastric foreign body in a 2 year old entire female Labrador

A 2 year old entire female Labrador was referred to the R(D)SVS Internal Medicine service with a history of eating a metallic beer bottle top. Abdominal radiographs confirmed the presence of a metallic beer bottle top within the abdomen (figure 1). Whilst this was causing no problems currently, the obvious concern was that it could move out of the stomach and into the intestines, causing an obstruction. Surgery could have been performed to remove the bottle top, but as the dog's owners were hoping to breed her soon, surgery could have interfered with these plans. Instead, it was hoped that it could be retrieved endoscopically.

Initially, the forceps grasped the bottle top and moved it out of the pylorus where it was sitting. However, when we tried to pull it into the oesophagus, cardia proved stronger than our grip on the bottle top, and it kept falling off.

Our next plan was to try to ensnare the bottle top within a basket device, but this proved to be very difficult due to the disc shape of the bottle top with corrugated edges. A novel approach was required. We passed large rigid forceps just into the stomach. These are normally used for removing foreign bodies from the oesophagus, as they cannot be directed in the sac-like structure of the stomach. Next, we gripped the bottle top with our flexible forceps, and fed it into the jaws of the rigid forceps. These had a strong enough grip to pull the bottle top through the cardia and up the oesophagus. This innovative approach ensured that the dog avoided surgery and returned home later that evening.
Figure 1: Right lateral and ventro-dorsal abdominal radiographs revealing metallic density foreign body in cranial abdomen.