Obstructive Atelectasis Caused by Total Obstruction of the Left Main Bronchus by Mucous Plug

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Complete obstructive atelectasis caused by mucous plugs in the main bronchus can lead to life-threatening emergencies. Here, we report a case of atelectasis resulting in total obstruction of the left main bronchus due to a very large amount of thick purulent secretion, which was resolved using a fiberoptic bronchoscopic toilet.

DISCUSSION

Atelectasis is a state in which the lungs are completely or partly collapsed, most commonly occurs postoperatively, and is caused by cystic fibrosis, lung tumors, chest injuries, lung fluids, respiratory weakness, and presence of foreign objects. Mucous plugs can also lead to atelectasis, and the main bronchial plug leads to complete pulmonary collapse, which can ultimately lead to life-threatening conditions (1). Conventional chest radiography in a critically ill patient is the cornerstone of day-to-day management (2). In addition, the possibility of atelectasis should be considered when O2 sat and pO2 changes occur. In this case, following a bronchoscopic toilet, O2 sat decreased from 98.1 to 86.9 and then increased to 99.2, whereas pO2 decreased from 121 to 54, and then increased to 113. Ghosh et al. (3) reported a case of left main bronchus obstructed by a...
chunk of thick mucous in a 6-year-old male, and a uniform opacity involving the whole lung field obscuring the heart shadow (Silhouette sign).

Conflict of Interest Statement
None of authors has a conflict of interest

REFERENCE

1. Coco D, Leanza S. Pleural Effusion or Main Left Bronchus Mucus Obstruction: To Drain or Not to Drain?