

I hope the day finds you well.

This ER story is a little more light-hearted than my last one.

A four-year-old girl named T.J. came into the ER with the chief complaint, "Something in nose."

Often children have a sensation of an object in their throat or eye after it has been scratched by an object now long gone. The children, and therefore the parents, are often quite convinced it remains.

Sometimes, the object is there. I have removed popcorn and live bugs from ears, glass from eyes, and objects of various sorts from many different areas of the body. Some, almost surreal, like my patient whose chief complaint was 'bat in mouth.' Or creative drug smugglers.

But I had never treated an object in the nose before.

T.J. in fact did have something in her nose, what looked like a bean, lodged fairly far high in. She tried to blow it out to no avail, which began our problem solving.

There is no 'bean remover' on the instrument cart. So everyone had their own idea, each with a different mechanism of action, and different potential for injury.

**MECHANICAL:** Take a pair of forceps and grab it. (We could not get around the corners; and this hurts anyway)

**SUCTION:** Take a suction device and grab the round end of the bean to dislodge it. (A seal would not form)

**CHEMICAL:** Put a drop of superglue (the human version superglue is called 'Dermabond' and is now used to glue simple wounds shut) onto the end of a Q-tip and carefully snare the bean. (I didn't even try this for fear of leaving a cotton wad glued to the wall of T.J.'s nose.

Eventually what worked was placing a resuscitation 'Ambu' bag over the mouth, plugging the other nostril, and, with a generous puff of air, propelling the bean into mother's lap, where T.J. had been perched for the entire ordeal.

I was quite satisfied. Very seldom in the ER do solutions come so cleanly.

T.J. picked up the bean and began examining it intently, consumed with curiosity as though she had never seen it before.

Then, one of the nurses asked T.J. how she got the bean in her nose.

Her reply was simple, "Like this."

As which point T.J. reinserted the same bean into the same nostril, starting the process all over again.

T.J. began gently crying almost immediately in full realization of her predicament. The deep gasp initiating her outcry lodged the bean back in quite firmly.

The removal did go a lot quicker the second time.

This time I threw the bean away.