

Answers to Medical Quiz

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The feeding nasogastric tube was reinserted by the nurse at the bedside in the general ward, the position was only checked by auscultation test. However the tube has in fact been inadvertently introduced into the trachea and then forced into the right main bronchus. The patient was continuously fed through the nasogastric tube, which explains the deterioration in the patient's condition.

The bedside auscultation test is not an accurate or reliable test in detecting the position of feeding nasogastric tube and even it can be misleading as in this patient¹. However chest radiography can accurately detect nasogastric tube position and may prevent such complication².

The signs and symptoms of the feeding nasogastric malpositioning in intensive care patients may be absent or misleading², but a routine chest examination including chest x-ray can instantly detect such malpositioning of the nasogastric tube¹. Feeding should not be started before nasogastric has been confirmed in position.

Finally this case supports the policy of obtaining routine chest radiographs in ICU patients, which is cost effective³.

REFERENCES

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