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Cobblestones The seed of an ulcer

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Necrotic vegetable seed
measuring 7 × 3 mm.

A 34 year old Caucasian heterosexual male, a civil servant, presented to the clinic with a penile ulcer, which he noticed on the day of attendance. Neither he nor his regular partner had had any oral or genital ulceration before. He had not applied any topical treatment to the penis nor inserted a foreign body. Examination revealed a preputial ulcer with an underlying hard nodule measuring 7 × 3 × 1 mm which was squeezed out easily (fig). Microscopy showed that it was necrotic vegetable material, possibly a seed.

Implantation of foreign bodies under the skin of the penis to enhance coital excitement and orgasm of the sexual partner during intercourse has been reported. This practice appears to be quite common in Thailand; where it is performed by unqualified people in prisons and among lower socio-economic groups. The procedure entails piercing the

penile skin with a sharp instrument without local anaesthetic, and inserting one or more beads in to the superficial fascia. Most beads are derived from the bottoms of pomade glass jars, but other objects such as stones, bullets, grains of rice, pearls, and jewels may also be used.¹ The resulting artificial penile nodules are diagnosable by the stony hardness of the implanted beads. Foreign body implantation can be complicated by incarceration, granulomatous reaction, abscess formation, fistula or ulcer as in our case.

Unlike the previously reported cases of foreign body implantation our patient seems to have acquired the seed unwittingly, possibly through oro-genital contact.

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