



G28 Foreign Bodies: Three Cases of Projectile Maintenance Without Complications

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn about the possibility of retention of foreign bodies, like projectiles, in the body during long periods of time without any symptoms or evident complications, and that are only accidentally discovered during an autopsy performed due to another cause of death. However, there are some cases where problems may occur, being the bullets the cause of several symptoms and even sudden death. Thus, a regular follow up of the victim must be done in these situations and sometimes a surgical removal is needed.

This presentation will impact the forensic community by showing three cases where projectiles were maintained in the body for several years, due to previous gunshot injuries. In one of these cases, the projectile was found during the autopsy of a traffic accident victim. Surprisingly it had remained in the pericardial cavity for 12 years! In the other two cases, concerning living persons, the projectiles stayed in the corpse of a dorsal vertebra and in the sphenoid sinus, respectively, for many years.

The possible complications and risks of bullets maintenance in victim's bodies are reviewed and the authors stress the particular attention that these situations demand during the medical forensic assessment of these individuals.

The retention of projectiles in the body is an unusual situation. Sometimes these projectiles are maintained for life in the body without any symptoms or evident complications, and are only accidentally discovered during an autopsy performed due to another cause of death.

Foreign Bodies, Projectiles, Autopsy