

Pane in the back

P Macpherson, J S H Davidson

Institute of Neurological
Sciences, Southern
General Hospital, Glasgow
P Macpherson, FRCR,
consultant neuroradiologist

Victoria Infirmary,
Glasgow
J S H Davidson, FRCR,
consultant radiologist

Correspondence to: Dr
Macpherson.

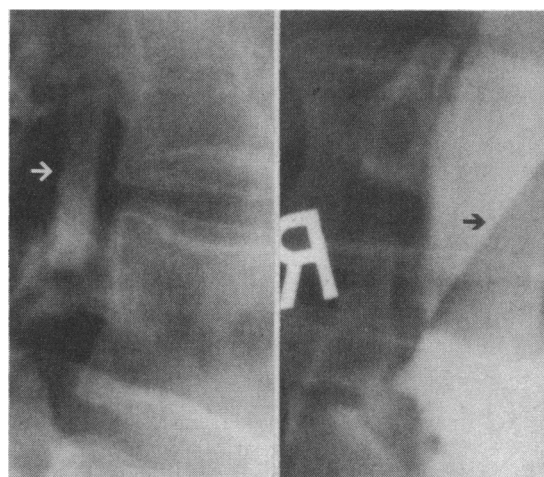
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Sciatica is a multifactorial condition, and knowledge of the patient's history may be important as a pointer to the root of the problem.

Case report

A woman fell on to a glass covered coffee table that broke, causing her to sustain a laceration in the region of the right sacroiliac joint. Her wound was explored and pieces of glass removed from the tissues. A subsequent localised radiograph showed no evidence of a residual fragment.

She attended 18 months later complaining of pain in the posterior thigh with radiation to the ankle. x Ray examination of the lumbar spine showed a piece of glass within the spinal canal at L3/4 (figure; left). Myelography showed a subarachnoid location, the oblique views showing the triangular shape of the fragment pointing upwards (figure; right). At operation a 5 cm long piece of glass was removed with immediate resolution of her symptoms.



Left: Lumbar spine: lateral view showing rectangular foreign body;
right: radiculogram: oblique view showing triangular filling defect

Comment

The fragment of glass retrieved from our patient must have entered through a sacral foramen and migrated proximally. Sciatica is often associated with lumbago but uniquely here with pane in the back.

Impact of medical school training on doctors' nutritional awareness: an evaluation using the *Good Food Guide* database

Richard Wakeford

Office of the Regius
Professor of Physic,
Cambridge University
School of Clinical
Medicine, Addenbrooke's
Hospital, Cambridge CB2
2QQ
Richard Wakeford, MA,
senior research associate

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The importance of an understanding of nutrition by doctors has long been asserted,¹ and the General Medical Council's *Recommendations as to Basic Medical Education* of 1967 may be construed as encouraging, among other things, the inclusion of the subject in the undergraduate curriculum.² The report of the council's major (1975-6) inquiry into medical schools' endeavours found evidence that nutrition was then entering the medical curriculum.³ Unfortunately, the impact of such developments has not been rigorously evaluated. My study corrected this situation.

Methods and results

The *Good Food Guide* is compiled from readers' submissions. It is an independent reference source of the best restaurants in the United Kingdom, entries being based on recommendations, which are supported by visits from the guide's inspectors. Only readers whose recommendations are verified by experts in this way are included and mentioned in the guide. They are thus some of the most nutritionally aware members of the community. Medically qualified contributors were identified in the 1987 guide. Their date of qualification and medical school were obtained from the *Medical Directory 1987*. The numbers qualifying in each quinquennium from 1941 to 1986 and the numbers who graduated from each medical school in the United Kingdom were computed. Nutritional awareness was correlated with date of qualification and with the amount of teaching (if any) reported to be given to nutrition in the medical schools' curricula.⁴

In total 107 doctors were identified. The table shows their distribution by medical school and the amount of

teaching in nutrition given by each school. Some subjects qualified only by means of the Conjoint Board's examinations. No apothecaries (LMSSA) were discovered.

Schools with the lowest nutritional awareness factor (NAF) were Leicester, the Royal Free, St George's, Westminster, Newcastle and Durham, Nottingham, and Southampton. Schools with the highest nutritional awareness—the most NAF—were Edinburgh and St

Numbers of medically qualified contributors to "Good Food Guide" graduating since 1941 by medical school with numbers of hours of teaching allocated to nutrition by each school

Medical school	Contributors	Hours of nutrition teaching
Aberdeen	5	
Belfast	2	
Birmingham	8	
Bristol	3	
Cambridge*	2	
Dundee	1	
Edinburgh	10	
Glasgow	3	
Leeds	6	103
Leicester		
Liverpool	6	
London:		
Charing Cross	1	
Guy's	7	
King's	3	
The London	4	
Middlesex	4	60
Royal Free		9
St Bartholomew's	13	
St George's		16
St Mary's	4	
St Thomas's	3	
University College Hospital	8	
Westminster		
Manchester	4	
Newcastle†		73
Nottingham		29
Oxford	4	
St Andrews	2	
Sheffield	2	
Southampton		
Wales	2	

* Cambridge Clinical School graduates only.

† Including Durham.