Foreign Body Aspiration (FBA) is commonly seen in children; however, it is rarely seen in adults. In cases of initially silent FBA, one must have a high index of suspicion to arrive at the diagnosis. In a retrospective study of 100 patients from whom a foreign body was retrieved, only 34% of these patients had FBA considered as part of the differential diagnosis. In most cases involving adults, asking directed questions to obtain the aspiration/choking history can help yield the diagnosis. Once the diagnosis is made, prompt removal of the foreign object is essential to avoid long-term complications. Although FBA is a rare cause of chronic cough in adults, this differential should be entertained when management of other more obvious causes of chronic cough is not leading to clinical improvement in patients.

References