Using the tongue to palpate a lesion in the postnasal space: a unique case of self-diagnosis

Nora Haloob,1 Robert Nash2

DESCRIPTION
This 64-year-old lady presented to ear, nose and throat department with a history of left-sided nasal blockage and a lesion in her postnasal space which was palpable by her tongue. In figure 1, the patient demonstrates how she was able to self-diagnose the cause of her symptoms, and therefore prompting a general practitioner referral, by manoeuvring the tip of her tongue to fit into the postnasal space. Flexible nasal-endoscopy and CT confirmed a large antrochoanal polyp in her left nostril extending to the postnasal space. She went on to have functional endoscopic sinus surgery and polypectomy.

Learning points
▸ Clinicians should never underestimate the value of a patient’s input in formulating a diagnosis.
▸ An unusual method for the human body to self-diagnose an anatomically discreet lesion.

Figure 1 Oropharynx showing the tongue reflected behind the soft palate in the postnasal space.