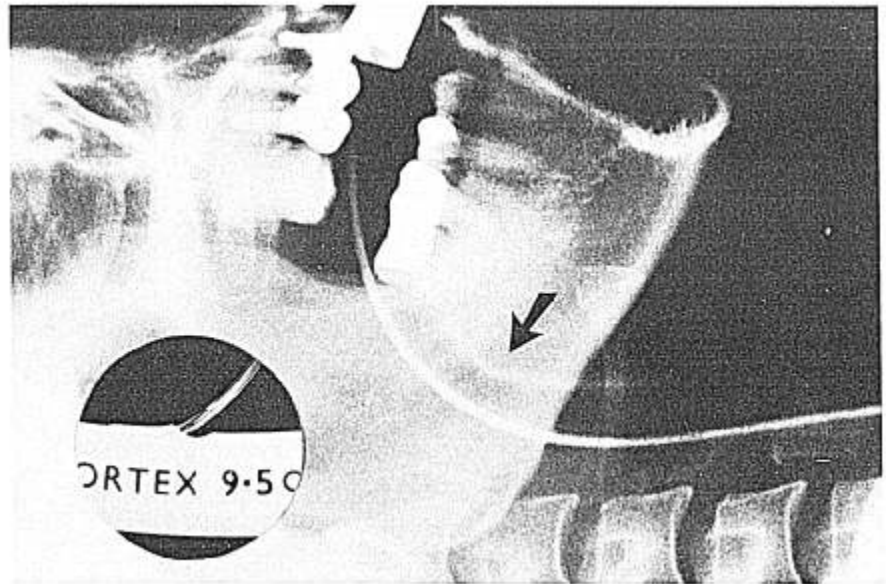


FIG. 1. Beginning of kinking in mouth cavity (arrow) occurring at notch (cut out) without neck flexion.



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Bupivacaine Toxicity and Bier Blocks

To the Editor:—The case report and careful work of Rosenberg and co-workers¹ substantiates the concern workers in the United Kingdom have felt regarding the use of bupivacaine for Bier block.² Your readership should be aware that in the period 1979 to date, seven patients have died in the United Kingdom as a result of Bier blocks in which bupivacaine was used. Although full details are not available, in some cases at least, it appears that recommended drug dosage (1.5 ml/kg as an 0.2% solution) was used and that early cuff deflation was not a factor.

The Council of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland has requested the Committee on Safety of Medicines to consider appropriate action to prevent the use of bupivacaine for this technique.

I have been unable to find any record of serious complications arising from the use of prilocaine 0.5% for this technique, and on present evidence it would appear to be a satisfactory alternative.^{3,4}

I would be grateful if any of your readers can contribute

to our knowledge of the safety or otherwise of prilocaine for Bier block.

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