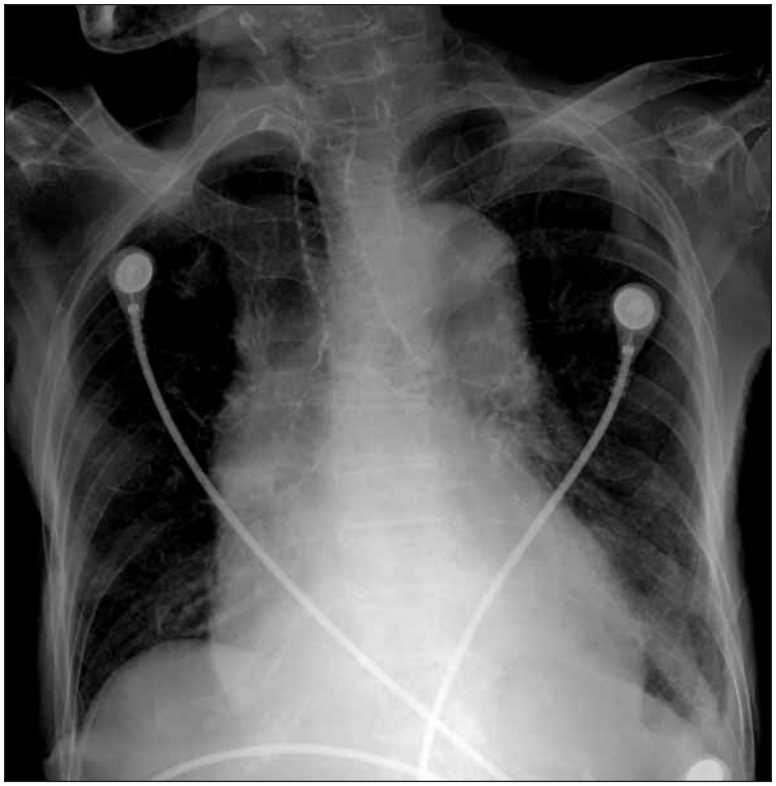

Figure 1: Chest radiograph showing extensive tracheobronchial calcification forming a clear outline of the patient's large and smaller airways, which are usually radiolucent.

Tracheal calcification

A 92-year-old woman was admitted to our hospital because of congestive heart failure aggravated by uncontrolled atrial fibrillation. A chest radiograph showed extensive tracheal calcification (Figure 1). This finding is common in elderly patients and is seen almost exclusively in patients aged 40 years and older. Although visually remarkable, this finding is of no practical clinical significance. However, tracheal calcification may occur more often among patients who have taken an anticoagulation medication, such as warfarin sodium, for several years.[1] Although the mechanism by which warfarin causes tracheal calcification is unknown, it may inhibit the normal formation of a vitamin K–dependent protein that prevents calcification of cartilage and connective tissue.[2]

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Clinical images are chosen because they are particularly intriguing, classic or dramatic. Submissions of clear, appropriately labelled high-resolution images must be accompanied by a figure caption and the patient's written consent for publication. A brief explanation (300 words maximum) of the educational significance of the images with minimal references is required.

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