Medical Image of the Week: Tracheal Stenosis

Figure 1. Pulmonary function tests showing a flat inspiratory loop.

Figure 2. When viewed from vocal cords, tracheal stenosis seen distally (arrow).

Figure 3. Tracheal stenosis seen on bronchoscopy (arrow).
A 43-year-old woman was seen in clinic for dyspnea on exertion that began several months ago. Prior workup included a computed tomography of the chest with mild narrowing noted in the upper trachea. Pulmonary function tests (Figure 1) showed a flat inspiratory loop with a normal expiratory loop, which suggests a variable extrathoracic obstruction. On bronchoscopy, a tracheal stenosis was seen just past the vocal cords (Figure 2, Figure 3). Balloon dilation (Figure 4) of the stenosis returned the area to normal caliber.

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