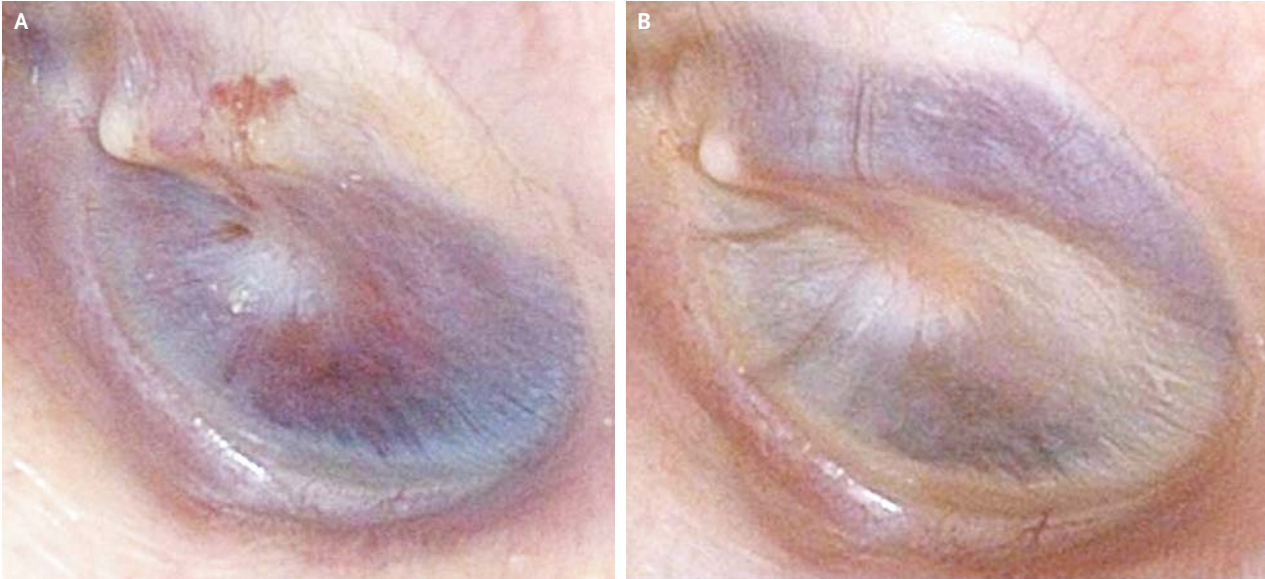


IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Hemotympanum



Kenta Watanabe, M.D., Ph.D.

Tokyo Metropolitan Tama Medical Center
Tokyo, Japan
quentaw@aol.com

A 78-YEAR-OLD MAN PRESENTED BECAUSE OF LEFT-SIDED HEARING LOSS and ear fullness after a head injury that occurred during a walk 5 days earlier. Otoscopy of the left ear revealed a dark-bluish-purple eardrum, a finding suggestive of hemotympanum (Panel A). Audiometric findings were consistent with conductive hearing loss in the left ear. Computed tomography revealed a fracture of the left temporal bone, fluid accumulation in both the tympanic cavity and the mastoid cells, and small contusions of the temporal lobe. The patient was observed but not hospitalized, in accordance with a neurosurgeon's advice. At a follow-up visit 3 weeks later, no hemotympanum was detected on otoscopic examination (Panel B) and the patient's hearing had almost recovered. Hemotympanum often appears in cases of temporal-bone fracture.

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