Doctors pull knife from man’s eye that went through his brain—and he’s fine now

A man in his 20s showed up to a UK hospital with the hilt of a knife sticking out of his face. The 15 mm-wide blade hidden within went completely through his right eye and through his brain, with the tip of the blade hitting the top of his skull.

Despite the ghastly injury, the man was alive and conscious when he arrived. He could still talk and move all four limbs. His doctors described him as being in a state of agitation. On the Glasgow Coma Scale, he scored a 12 (E3 V4 M5), indicating a “moderate” brain injury, just one point above “mild.” He could open his left eye when told, but otherwise kept it closed (E3 score); he could talk and answer questions, but was confused (V4); and he intentionally moved away when pressure was applied to his body (M5).

In a report published Friday in BMJ Case Report, his doctors said they were concerned that in his confused, agitated state he may try to pull the knife out on his own. So, they swiftly sedated and intubated him. They put him on prophylactic treatments for bacterial infections, including tetanus. Then they used images to see what was going on in his head.

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