Indian doctor pulls live cockroach from woman's skull

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It's the stuff of nightmares—a cockroach crawls up your nose in the middle of the night, burrows in and drives you mad with scratching behind your eyes. But for one Indian woman, this horror story proved all too real.

The 42-year-old had a painful crawling sensation behind her eyes when she woke up, so rushed to a local clinic where her nose was flushed and she was sent home.

But the sensation didn't subside, and it wasn't until a specialist explored her nasal passages with an endoscope that she learned the awful truth.

"I saw some tiny legs moving inside," M.N. Shankar, an ear, nose and throat specialist at Chennai's Stanley Medical College Hospital, told AFP on Wednesday.

"I looked further in and almost five centimetres from the tip of the nose I saw something unusual.

"I realised I was actually looking at the bottom of a cockroach."

The invasive critter had burrowed deep inside her nose, almost to the base of the skull, and was still alive after roughly 12 hours, Shankar added.

Using an instrument akin to a vacuum cleaner, Shankar managed to

extract the cockroach from her skull intact—still alive and kicking.

It was the first time Shankar had seen anything like it in his three decades of medical practice.

The woman was doing "absolutely fine" following the 45-minute procedure, he said, but was "embarrassed she had a cockroach up her nose".

"It was an out of the world kind of thing for her," he said.

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