

Post-Tonsillectomy Hemorrhage and Other Complications

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Background: Post-tonsillectomy hemorrhage is a serious complication; if not managed properly, it could be life threatening.

Objective: To evaluate the incidence of post-tonsillectomy bleeding.

Design: A Retrospective Study.

Setting: ENT Department, King Hamad University Hospital, Bahrain.

Method: Seven hundred twenty-nine patients operated for tonsillectomy from February 2012 to February 2014 were included in the study. Patients who had tonsillectomy in other hospitals were excluded from the study.

Some surgeons used hot technique, others used cold technique. Some patients had been operated for adenoidectomy and turbinate reduction by laser. Data documented were age, gender, type of tonsillectomy technique used, type of hemorrhage (primary or secondary), type of management postoperatively and other postoperative complications.

Result: Seven hundred twenty-nine patients were operated for tonsillectomy from February 2012 to February 2014. Twenty-eight (3.8%) patients had post-tonsillectomy bleeding, 9 (1.2%) were children and 19 (2.6%) were adults. Two (0.2%) were primary and 26 (3.6%) were secondary bleeding. Twelve (1.6%) patients underwent tonsillectomy by hot technique and 16 (2.2%) by cold technique. Twenty (2.7%) patients were managed by admission and observation. Eight (1.1%) were managed by cautery or ligation in the operation theater. The female to male ratio was 11:17. Other complications encountered were broken tooth, neck pain, nasal bleeding, and fever.

Conclusion: In this study, the incidence of post-tonsillectomy bleeding was 3.8% and no mortality was recorded during the period of the study. Further multicentric study with a larger sample is recommended.

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