Inverted Papilloma Isolated in the Nasopharynx

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Inverted Papilloma (IP) is an uncommon benign sinonasal neoplasm of a particular interest because of its capacity to recur and undergo malignant transformation. It affects usually the lateral nasal wall, but rarely develops in the nasopharynx. We report a case of a well-defined polypoidal lesion of the nasopharynx presented with decreased hearing secondary to unilateral middle ear effusion. It was completely excised through an endoscopic transnasal approach with no clinical evidence of recurrence. A minimally invasive endoscopic technique was deemed the appropriate surgical procedure for the resection of isolated nasopharyngeal benign lesions.


Inverted Papilloma (IP) is a rare benign sinonasal tumor of ectodermal origin, which is locally invasive and has a high tendency for recurrence and transformation into squamous cell carcinoma. It is reported to have an incidence of 5% to 4% of all primary nasal tumors. It arises from the lateral wall of the nose in 90% of cases and rarely from the nasal septum. The most common sinus involved is the maxillary sinus, followed by the ethmoid, sphenoid and the frontal sinus being the least common sinus involved. IP is more common in men than women; it affects white more than black races, and it has its highest incidence in the sixth and seventh decades of life.

However, IP is rarely seen in the nasopharynx. Acevedo-Henao et al reported an incidence of 3% involving the nasopharynx. The symptoms of IP include: unilateral nasal obstruction, nasal discharge, facial discomfort, headache, epistaxis, foul smell, otalgia and hearing impairment.

The external approach remains the gold standard for sinonasal lesions because it gives a better exposure, complete excision and low recurrence rates. Advancement in endoscopic technology and imaging facilities in the last two decades made endoscopic resection the preferred technique for most surgeons to clear the disease with a minimal postoperative sequel. Some endoscopic surgeons use the external approach for recurrent cases.

The aim of this report is to present a rare case of nasopharyngeal inverted papilloma.

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