Original Research Article

A comparative study of synechiae formation in endoscopic septoplasty with and without intranasal splints

M. Nagachaitanya*, M. Santosh Reddy, Uzma Mohammadi, G. Prathyusha

INTRODUCTION

A deviated nasal septum is labelled when the septum is not in midline and cause symptoms like nasal obstruction, chronic nasal congestion, sinusitis, repeated ear infections, or nose bleed. Nasal septum surgery is one of the most common surgical procedures performed in the field of otorhinolaryngology.

Septoplasty is the corrective surgery for these symptomatic septal deviations. Surgical complications of Septoplasty are relatively uncommon. However, there is possibility of haemorrhage, infection, septal perforation and intranasal adhesions. Formation of adhesions between septum and lateral nasal wall of nose is a common problem after nasal surgery. Nasal adhesions form as a result of contact between raw surface of operated nasal septum and the lateral nasal wall. This results in partial or complete nasal obstruction of affected side. Prevention of post-operative nasal adhesions is an important aspect of nasal surgery.

To prevent the formation of these adhesions, meticulous nasal toilet has been advocated. In addition, plastic or silicone splints are placed alongside of nasal septum to prevent contact between raw surface of septum and lateral nasal wall. Intranasal splints are also helpful in maintaining postoperative septal instability.

Use of nasal splints to prevent nasal adhesion formations following septal surgery has been documented in literature. This study would help us in determining...
whether the use of nasal splints for prevention of nasal adhesions after septal surgery would be beneficial or not.

Our study will account for the outcome of septoplasty with intranasal splints to formulate a set plan for using splints for septal surgery patients, so that they may benefit both in terms of morbidity as well as cost effectiveness.

**Aims**

Aims of the study were to assess the improvement in the formation of synechiae and adhesion following septoplasty with intranasal splints; to assess the formation of synechiae without intranasal splints; and to assess the efficacy of usage of X-ray films as intranasal splints.

**METHODS**

The study was conducted in ENT department of Malla Reddy Institute of Medical Sciences. Patients with DNS were included in the study. Risk benefit ratio and ethics were discussed. Period of study is taken from March 2018 to March 2019.

**Study design**

**Setting**

The study was conducted at a tertiary referral hospital.

**Period of study**

The period of the study was from March 2018 to March 2019.

**Study design**

The design of the study was randomized control trial.

**Type of study**

The study was a comparative type of study.

**Sample size**

The size of the sample was 100.

**Inclusion criteria**

All patients of DNS and septal spur with age group 18 and 50 years are included in the study.

**Exclusion criteria**

Exclusion criteria were age group <18 years and >50 years patients with previous nose surgeries.

Written informed consent shall be taken after explaining the merits/complications of tympanoplasty. All the necessary blood and radiological investigations shall be carried out for the purpose of surgery.

**Instruments of septoplasty**

Chisels, elevators, forceps, hooks, knives, osteotomes, punches, rasps, retractors-hand held and fibreoptic, scissors, speculum, suction tubes, and trocars were used in the study.

**Operative technique**

All the surgeries were performed by ENT surgeons under local or general anesthesia. The septum was infiltrated with 2% lignocaine with adrenaline 1: 2,00,000. Killians or Freer’s incision is made on one side of nasal septum. The septum is approached by elevating perichondrial and periosteal flap. The deviated part of septum is corrected by various methods, such as: scoring on the concave side, cross-hatching or morselizing, shaving, and edge excision.

Further manipulations like realignment of nasal spine, separation of septal cartilage from upper lateral cartilage strip in the columella or the dorsum of nose may be required.

Trans-septal sutures are put to close mucoperichondrial flaps.

In group 1 patients INS were placed and then anterior nasal packing done. In group 2 only anterior nasal packing was done.

X-ray films used as splints were placed on both sides of septum and were fixed by stay suture to avoid slippage of the splint. Both the nostrils were packed with soframycin soaked gauze pack. Nasal pack was removed after 48 hours of surgery and nasal splints were removed one week postoperatively. All patients were given antibiotics, analgesics and nasal spray for one week. DNE done for inspection of the nasal cavities on the day of removal of splints and two weeks from the date of surgery. On both occasions nasal cavities are being assessed for the formation of nasal adhesions.
Data analysis procedure

Data was analyzed by “Open epi”. Frequency and percentage was used to describe qualitative data like formation of post-operative nasal adhesions. To compare the groups for nasal adhesion frequency, Chi square test was applied. A p value 0.05 was considered statistically significant. The final data representation comprises of pie charts, cross tabulation and tables.

RESULTS

A total of 100 cases fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria were enrolled to compare the efficacy of intranasal splints in the prevention of nasal adhesions following septal surgery.

The study was divided into two groups in which, 50 patients with intranasal splints with soframycin soaked anterior nasal pack were included in group 1 and in another group of 50 patients, only soframycin soaked anterior nasal pack was used postoperatively. The results were evaluated on aspects of adhesion formation in each group and results have been tabulated below in detail.

Chi square test was used to obtain information and analyze data.

In group 1, 48 patients (96%) had not developed synechiae formation and 2 patients (4%) developed synechiae.

In group 2, 35 patients (70%) had no synechiae formation and 15 patients (30%) had developed synechiae following surgery.

A p value was calculated as 0.05 or 5% showing a significant difference.

| Synechiae formation | Group 1 (%) | Group 2 (%) |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Yes                 | 2 (4)       | 15 (30)     |
| No                  | 48 (96)     | 35 (70)     |
| Total               | 50          | 50          |

Table 2: Age wise distribution in group ‘1’ and group ‘2’.

| Group     | 20 years (or) less | 21-30 years | 31-40 years | 41-50 years |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Group 1   | 2                  | 20          | 24          | 4           |
| Group 2   | 6                  | 26          | 14          | 4           |

Table 3: Gender wise comparison in in group 1 and 2.

| Gender | Group 1 | Group 2 |
|--------|---------|---------|
| Male   | 26      | 22      |
| Female | 24      | 28      |
Our study shows that the nasal splint increases comorbidities such as pain and discomfort in post-surgical period. On the other hand it presented high efficiency to prevent post-surgical synechiae formation in patients who underwent septoplasty.

DISCUSSION

Synechiae is an adherence between the two mucosal surfaces in the nasal cavity which may cause nasal obstruction which will lead to rhinitis and rhinosinusitis.

And this also increases the hospital visits and loss of man days.

In order to avoid such adhesions, nasal splints have been developed. Our patients were divided into two groups. The first one were treated with nasal splint and the second one without nasal splint.

In 1988, some authors proved the increase of synechiae incidence in septoplasty when associated to turbinectomy presenting as 36% rate. The use of nasal splint is only justified when it really presents advantage to the patient.

According to results of our study, only 2 out of 50 patients developed nasal adhesions with splints and without splints 15 out of 50 patients. These results are comparable to other international studies which also states a significant lower rate of nasal adhesion in splinted patients than in non-splinted patients.

Deniz et al suggested that nasal splints were effective in reducing the incidence of nasal synechiae formation.

Schoenberg et al found a low incidence of adhesions in first week postoperatively when intranasal adhesions occurred in non-splinted patients who had surgery to both walls of nasal cavity (3.6% in splinted versus 31.6% in non-splinted).

Roberto et al found that nasal splints were effective in preventing adhesion formation in patients undergoing septoplasty with turbinectomy (0% in splinted and 10.6% in non-splinted groups).

Rahman concluded that the complications were related to the type of procedure being performed and adhesions were common complication if intranasal splint were not provided. Splints should be visualized depending upon procedure being performed. X-ray splints are cost effective and easily available.

CONCLUSION

Intranasal adhesions are relatively common after septoplasty. According to study use of nasal splints for 4 to 7 days could avoid intranasal adhesions in almost all cases. Therefore, it can be considered as the preferred technique in septoplasty. To make it more authentic we will require a larger sample study.

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