



Bone Flap Infection: A retrospective analysis of all craniotomies over five years in a busy neurosurgical centre.

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Introduction

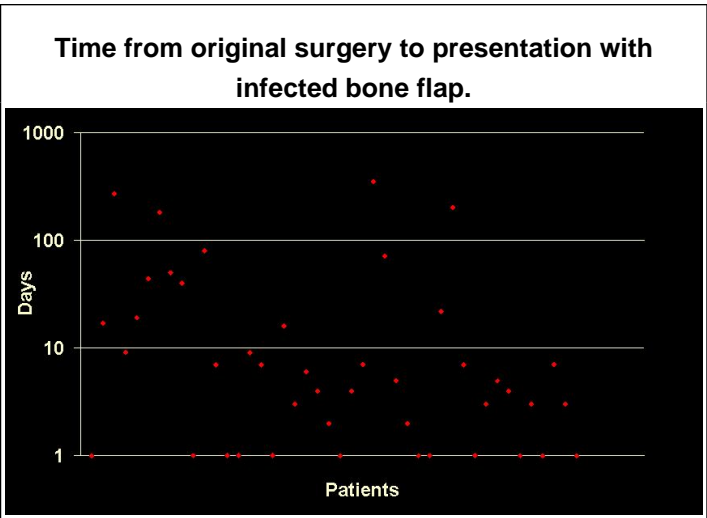
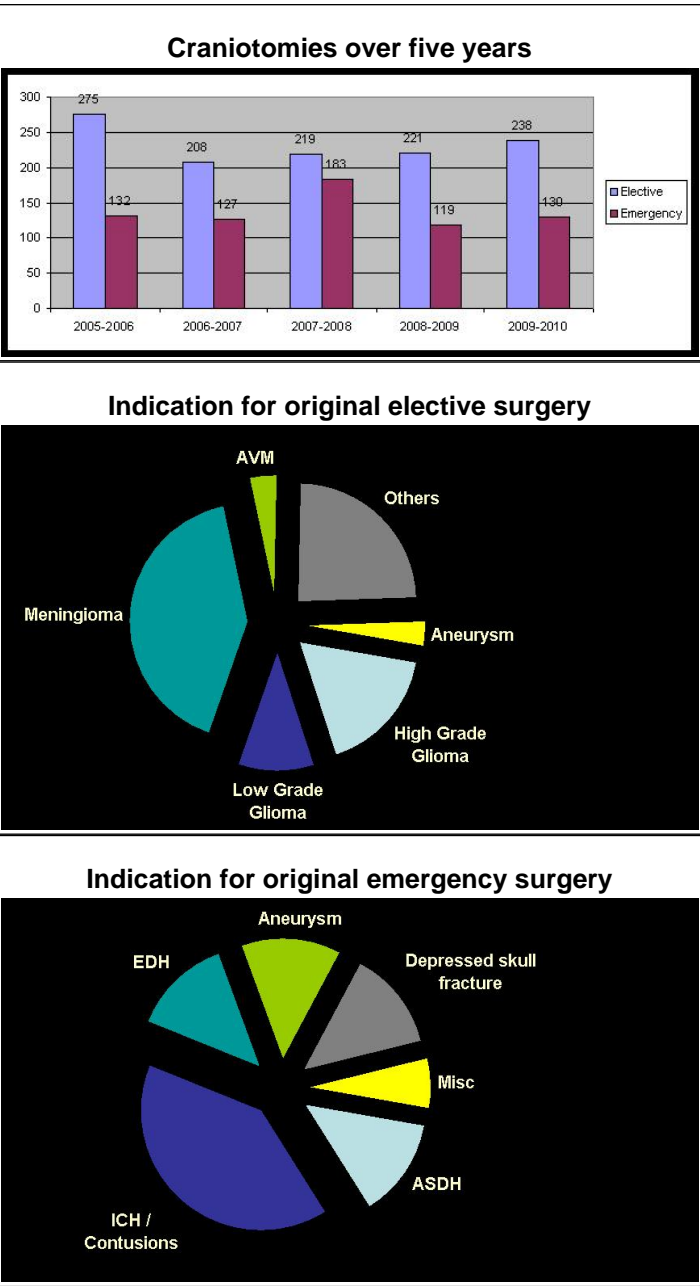
Infection is a serious complication after procedures that involve a craniotomy and often lead to removal of the bone flap. This contributes to significant morbidity and a small risk of mortality for the patient. The incidence of infection has been reported to be between 1- 8% as per various studies in the past. However it must be noted that there is varying practice in reporting infection.

Aim

We performed a retrospective analysis of all procedures that involved a craniotomy with the primary aim of ascertaining the infection rate in our centre and the associated factors that may help us reduce this rate in the future.

Method and Results

1852 primary craniotomies (63% elective, 37% emergency) were performed by multiple surgeons in our centre over a period of 5 years (May 2005 – April 2010). Patients were followed up for at least one year. 51 patients (2.75%) presented with bone flap infection. 31/51 patients’ had elective procedures whereas 20/51 underwent an emergency craniotomy. The median time difference between the primary procedure and recognition of infection was 49 days. The median duration of antibiotic treatment was 17 days.



Conclusions

The incidence of bone flap infection after craniotomy in our centre is comparable to others as per literature. The management of these patients is complex and carries significant risk of morbidity for the patients and financial implications for the health service.

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