

Perioperative Complications in Elderly Patients Undergoing Occipitocervical Fusion

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Introduction

Occipitocervical fusion (OCF) is a surgical option for complex craniovertebral pathology, but is known to be associated with morbidity. To date, this procedure and its associated perioperative complications have not been extensively studied in the elderly population. The goal of this study will be to report on OCF in patients over the age of 65 years.

Methods

A retrospective chart review was performed on 42 OCF patients, 27 of whom were greater than 65 years of age. The indications, perioperative data, and complications of each age group were then compared.

Results

The elderly group had an overall complication rate of 37% as compared to the non-elderly group complication rate of 27%. There was no mortality in either group.

Conclusions

While often required for severe pathology of the craniovertebral junction, OCF can be associated with significant morbidity. This appears to be further increased in patients over the age of 65 years.

Learning Objectives

Elderly OC fusion study

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