



Operative Evolution of Neck Dissection Surgery: Types, Recovery and Rehabilitation

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 28-Jul-2023, Manuscript No. EJMACES-23-114945;

Editor assigned: 31-Jul-2023, PreQC No. EJMACES-23-114945 (PQ);

Reviewed: 14-Aug-2023, QC No. EJMACES-23-114945;

Revised: 21-Aug-2023, Manuscript No. EJMACES-23-114945 (R);

Published: 28-Aug-2023

Description

Neck dissection is a surgical procedure that involves the removal of lymph nodes and surrounding tissue from the neck. It is primarily performed to diagnose and treat various conditions, most commonly cancers that affect the head and neck region. This intricate procedure plays a crucial role in improving the patient's prognosis and overall quality of life. This article discusses about different types of neck dissections, their indications, and the recovery process.

Types of neck dissection

Radical neck dissection: In a radical neck dissection, the surgeon removes all lymph nodes in the neck, along with surrounding muscle, nerve, and blood vessels. This procedure was historically performed as a standard treatment for advanced head and neck cancers, but advancements in surgical techniques have led to more selective approaches.

Modified radical neck dissection: A modified radical neck dissection is a less extensive procedure compared to the radical version. The surgeon removes some lymph nodes, but typically spares critical structures like nerves and blood vessels, aiming to preserve function and appearance.

Selective neck dissection: Selective neck dissection is the most conservative approach. Only specific groups of lymph nodes are removed, reducing the risk of complications and preserving function to the greatest extent possible.

Indications for neck dissection

Neck dissection is recommended for various conditions, primarily those related to head and neck cancer.

Head and neck cancer: Neck dissection is often performed when cancer has spread to the lymph nodes

in the neck. It helps in staging the cancer, determining its extent, and planning further treatment strategies.

Lymph node evaluation: In cases where there is uncertainty about the presence of cancer in lymph nodes, a neck dissection may be performed for diagnostic purposes.

Recurrent disease: If cancer reoccurs after initial treatment, a neck dissection may be necessary to remove affected lymph nodes and surrounding tissue.

Recovery and rehabilitation

Recovery from a neck dissection can be challenging, but advancements in surgical techniques have significantly improved outcomes and reduced complications.

Hospital stay: The length of the hospital stay varies depending on the type of neck dissection and the patient's overall health. Generally, patients can expect to stay in the hospital for a few days to a week.

Pain management: Pain management is a crucial aspect of recovery. Patients may experience discomfort and pain around the surgical site. Pain medications, both oral and intravenous, are administered to alleviate pain.

Swelling and drainage: Swelling and drainage from the surgical site are common in the initial days following the procedure. Drains may be placed to remove excess fluid, which helps reduce swelling.

Rehabilitation: Rehabilitation is a key part of the recovery process, particularly for patients who undergo extensive neck dissections. Physical therapy and speech therapy may be necessary to regain function in the neck and throat area.

Regular check up, follow-up appointments with the surgical team and oncologist are essential to mon-

itor healing and address any potential complications. Long-term follow-up is crucial for cancer patients to detect and treat any recurrence.

Neck dissection is a surgical procedure with a vital role in the diagnosis and treatment of head and neck conditions, particularly cancer. Advances in surgical techniques have allowed for more selective approaches,

reducing the impact on patients' quality of life. With proper care, rehabilitation, and follow-up, patients can regain function and lead fulfilling lives after a neck dissection. It is essential for individuals facing this procedure to have open communication with their health-care team to ensure the best possible outcome.