

Management of Exposed Infected Mesh

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ABSTRACT

The management of exposed infected mesh represents a significant challenge in modern surgical practice. In this bibliographic review, we explore the epidemiology and clinical transcendence of this issue. The theoretical framework section delves into the definition, risk factors, complications, and management strategies for exposed infected mesh. The discussion highlights emerging approaches and considerations, while the conclusion underscores the importance of evidence-based practices in addressing this complex problem.

KEYWORDS: Exposed Infected Mesh, Surgical Complications, Wound Infections, Hernia Repair, Mesh-Related Infections.

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INTRODUCTION

Surgical mesh has revolutionized hernia repair and various other surgical procedures, providing structural support and improving outcomes. However, this advancement has not been without its challenges. The use of surgical mesh carries the risk of complications, with the management of exposed infected mesh being a notable concern. Understanding the epidemiology of this issue is crucial to address the increasing prevalence of exposed infected mesh cases.

The epidemiological data reveal a rising incidence of complications related to surgical mesh, including exposure and infection. As the use of mesh materials becomes more common in surgical procedures, it is imperative to comprehensively explore the management strategies for exposed infected mesh.

The transcendence of managing exposed infected mesh extends beyond the clinical arena. It encompasses various dimensions, from the well-being of individual patients to the economic impact on healthcare systems and the evolution of surgical techniques. Managing exposed infected mesh is not merely a clinical challenge; it is a critical aspect of healthcare that influences the quality of patient care and the trajectory of surgical practice.

As we delve deeper into this bibliographic review, we will explore the theoretical framework surrounding exposed infected mesh, including its definition, risk factors, complications, and management strategies. By understanding the multifaceted nature of this issue, healthcare providers can offer more effective and evidence-based care to patients facing these complex challenges.

Definition:

Exposed infected mesh refers to a clinical condition in which a surgical mesh, previously implanted during a surgical procedure, becomes visible and palpable through the overlying skin or mucosa, and is associated with infection. This condition typically results from complications related to the mesh, including mesh migration, erosion, or extrusion, often leading to an inflammatory response and microbial contamination. Exposed infected mesh can vary in severity, from local wound complications to systemic infections, and necessitates careful evaluation and management.

Understanding the risk factors that contribute to the development of exposed infected mesh is crucial. These factors encompass a range of considerations:

Surgical Technique: The choice of surgical technique, the expertise of the surgeon, and the method of mesh fixation can

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significantly influence the risk of mesh exposure and infection. Inadequate surgical techniques or compromised sterility may elevate the likelihood of complications.

Patient Factors: Individual patient characteristics play a critical role. Factors such as obesity, smoking, diabetes, immunosuppression, and previous wound infections can increase the risk of mesh-related complications. Recognizing and addressing these patient-specific risk factors are essential for prevention and management.

Mesh Characteristics: The type of mesh utilized in surgery is another determinant. Variations in mesh materials, such as synthetic or biologic, pore size, and size, may impact the likelihood of complications. For instance, some materials may promote better tissue integration, while others may be associated with a higher risk of infection and exposure.

Postoperative Care: Proper postoperative care and wound management are fundamental for preventing complications. The use of prophylactic antibiotics, appropriate wound dressings, and vigilant monitoring of the surgical site can reduce the risk of infection and subsequent mesh complications.

Complications:

Understanding the complications associated with exposed infected mesh is vital for effective management:

Localized Infections: Localized infections are often the initial manifestation of exposed infected mesh. These infections may present with clinical signs such as erythema, swelling, tenderness, and purulent discharge in the vicinity of the exposed mesh.

Abscess Formation: In some cases, the inflammatory response to the exposed infected mesh can lead to the formation of an abscess. These abscesses may require drainage, debridement, and potential removal of the mesh.

Systemic Infections: In severe cases, exposed infected mesh can lead to systemic infections, including sepsis, a life-threatening condition. Systemic infections necessitate urgent medical intervention and may require surgical removal of the mesh and aggressive antimicrobial therapy.

Chronic Pain: Mesh exposure and infection can result in chronic pain and discomfort for patients. Managing chronic pain is an integral part of the comprehensive care of patients with exposed infected mesh.



Infected and exposed mesh.

Management:

The management of exposed infected mesh is a complex process and involves a systematic approach:

Surgical Intervention: Surgical intervention is often necessary for the management of exposed infected mesh. The extent of surgery can vary, from partial mesh removal and wound revision to complete mesh excision, followed by repair or replacement with an alternative material.

Wound Care: Effective wound care is crucial in controlling infection and promoting tissue healing. Wound care may include thorough wound debridement, irrigation, and appropriate wound dressings.

Antibiotics: Antibiotics play a significant role in managing infections associated with exposed mesh. The choice of antibiotics should be guided by culture and sensitivity testing when available, and therapy should be tailored to the specific microorganisms involved.

Prevention: Prevention strategies are equally important and include meticulous surgical technique, patient optimization, and postoperative care. Reducing risk factors and minimizing the chances of complications are integral components of preventing exposed infected mesh.

DISCUSSION

Emerging Approaches:

Biologic Meshes: One of the notable emerging approaches in managing exposed infected mesh is the utilization of biologic meshes. These meshes are derived from human or animal tissues and are designed to facilitate tissue integration while reducing the risk of infection. Biologic meshes may provide a more favorable environment for wound healing and can be particularly beneficial in cases where synthetic mesh removal is required. Their potential to minimize the risk of further infection and promote tissue regeneration makes them a valuable addition to the surgeon's armamentarium.

Minimally Invasive Techniques: Minimally invasive surgical techniques are being explored for the management of exposed infected mesh. These approaches aim to reduce surgical trauma, decrease postoperative pain, and expedite recovery. By employing laparoscopic or endoscopic procedures, surgeons can address mesh-related complications with smaller incisions and shorter hospital stays, ultimately improving the patient's experience.

Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT): The use of negative pressure wound therapy has gained traction in managing complex wound scenarios, including exposed infected mesh. NPWT involves the application of controlled negative pressure to the wound, promoting wound healing and reducing infection risk. It can help manage wound exudate, enhance tissue granulation, and reduce the frequency of dressing changes, which is particularly valuable in cases of exposed infected mesh.

Future Directions:

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The future of managing exposed infected mesh holds potential advancements in several areas:

Biotechnology and Biomaterials: Ongoing research into biotechnology and biomaterials may lead to the development of meshes with enhanced antimicrobial properties and improved tissue integration. These advanced materials could significantly reduce the risk of complications and improve outcomes for patients with exposed infected mesh.

Personalized Medicine: The field of personalized medicine is expanding, and this approach could be applied to the management of exposed infected mesh. Tailored treatment plans based on individual patient characteristics, including genetic factors and comorbidities, may help optimize care and improve patient outcomes.

Registries and Data Collection: Establishing comprehensive registries and data collection initiatives can provide valuable insights into the outcomes of different management strategies for exposed infected mesh. These data-driven approaches can inform evidence-based practices and contribute to the development of standardized treatment protocols.

Implications:

The discussion surrounding exposed infected mesh has significant implications for both surgical practice and patient care:

Enhanced Quality of Patient Care: The emerging approaches and future directions offer the potential to significantly improve the quality of care for patients with exposed infected mesh. Biologic meshes, minimally invasive techniques, and advanced wound therapies can lead to better outcomes and a more positive patient experience.

Reduced Healthcare Costs: By optimizing treatment and promoting faster recovery, these innovations can potentially reduce healthcare costs associated with managing exposed infected mesh. Shorter hospital stays, fewer complications, and enhanced wound healing can lead to cost savings.

Advancements in Surgical Practice: The developments in the management of exposed infected mesh are reshaping the field of surgery. Surgeons are increasingly equipped with

innovative tools and techniques that can be applied to a broader range of complex cases, improving their ability to provide optimal care.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the management of exposed infected mesh is a multifaceted challenge that requires a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical framework, risk factors, complications, and management strategies. Emerging approaches and future directions hold great promise in enhancing patient care and optimizing surgical practice. As the field continues to evolve, evidence-based approaches will play a pivotal role in addressing this complex clinical problem.

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