

# **Management of Postoperative Complications after Pneumectomy**

*An essay*

*Submitted for the Partial Fulfillment of Master Degree  
General intensive care*

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# List of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
List of abbreviations.....	i
List of tables .....	iv
List of figures .....	v
Introduction .....	1
<b>Chapter I:</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Anatomy and physiology of the respiratory system...	4
<b>Chapter II:</b> .....	<b>27</b>
Indications of pneumonectomy and pathophysiology of the diseased lung. ....	27
<b>Chapter III:</b> .....	<b>43</b>
Compansatory changes of the remaining lung after pneumonectomy .....	43
<b>Chapter IV:</b> .....	<b>53</b>
Complications and management after pneumonectomy.	53
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>85</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>87</b>
<b>Arabic summary</b> .....	<b>--</b>

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## List of Abbreviations

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ABG	:	Arterial blood gases
ALI	:	Acute lung injury
ARDS	:	Acute respiratory distress syndrome
ASA	:	American Society of Anesthesiologists
BPF	:	Bronchopleural fistula
C	:	Compliance
C.A.	:	Carbonic anhydrase enzyme
CO	:	Carbon monoxide
CO <sub>2</sub>	:	Carbon Dioxide
CPAP	:	Continuous Positive Airway Pressure
CSF	:	Cerebrospinal fluid
CT	:	Computed tomography
DLCO	:	Diffusing capacity of the lung for carbon monoxide
DPPC	:	Dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine
DS/TV	:	Dead space: tidal volume ratio
DVT	:	Deep Venous Thrombosis
EBUS	:	Endobronchial ultrasound-guided
ECG	:	Electrocardiogram
EGFR	:	Epidermal growth factor receptor
EPP	:	Extrapleural pneumonectomy
ERV	:	Expiratory Reserve Volume
FEV <sub>1</sub>	:	Forced Expiratory Volume in One Second
FEV <sub>j</sub>	:	Forced Expiratory Volume in One Second
FFP	:	Fresh frozen plasma
Fig	:	Figure
FiO <sub>2</sub>	:	Fraction of Inspired Oxygen
FRC	:	Functional Residual Capacity
FVC	:	Forced Vital Capacity
H <sup>+</sup>	:	Hydrogen ion
H <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub>	:	Carbonic acid
Hb	:	Haemoglobin
HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup>	:	Bicarbonate ions
HFOV	:	High Frequency Oscillatory Ventilation

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## List of Abbreviations (Cont.)

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HRCT	:	High-resolution computed tomography
ICU	:	Intensive Care Unit
Insp resistance	:	Mean inspiratory airway resistance
IRV	:	Inspiratory Reserve Volume
IV	:	Intravenous
MAP	:	Mean Airway Pressure
MEP	:	Maximal expiratory pressure
MI	:	Myocardial infarction
MIP	:	Maximal inspiratory pressure
MRI	:	Magnetic resonance imaging
MVV	:	Maximal voluntary ventilation
N <sub>2</sub> O	:	Nitrous oxide
nCPAP	:	non-invasive continuous positive airway pressure
nPPV	:	non invasive positive pressure ventilation
NSCLC	:	Non-small-cell lung carcinomas
O <sub>2</sub>	:	Oxygen
P <sub>50</sub>	:	The partial pressure of oxygen in the blood at which the hemoglobin is 50% saturated
PA mean	:	Mean pulmonary arterial pressure
PaCO <sub>2</sub>	:	Arterial Partial Carbon Dioxide tension
PaO <sub>2</sub>	:	Arterial Partial Oxygen tension
PCI	:	Percutaneous coronary intervention
PE	:	Pulmonary Embolism
P <sub>e</sub> CO <sub>2</sub>	:	partial pressure of carbon dioxide in the expired air
PEEP	:	Positive End Expiratory Pressure
PNX	:	Pneumonectomy
PPCs	:	Postoperative Pulmonary Complications
PPE	:	Postpneumonectomy Pulmonary Edema
PPS	:	Postpneumonectomy space
Q	:	Perfusion
RV	:	Residual Volume
SaO <sub>2</sub>	:	Oxygen Saturation

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## **List of Abbreviations (Cont.)**

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SCLC	:	Small-cell lung carcinoma
TB	:	Tuberculosis
TBNA	:	Transbronchial needle aspiration
TLC	:	Total lung Capacity
TNM	:	Tumour, Node, Metastasis
TV	:	Tidal Volume
V	:	Ventilation
V/Q	:	Ventilation / Perfusion
VC	:	Vital Capacity
V <sub>d</sub>	:	Dead space volume
VO <sub>2</sub>	:	Oxygen Consumption
V <sub>t</sub>	:	Tidal Volume
Δ P	:	Pressure change
Δ V	:	Volume change

## List of Tables

<b><i>Table</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>	<b><i>Page</i></b>
1	The criteria used in estimating post-operative risk in lung resective surgery	48
2	Physiological changes associated with pneumonectomy	50
3	Suggested guidelines for the treatment of atrial fibrillation after pneumonectomy	57

## List of Figures

<b><i>Fig.</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>	<b><i>Page</i></b>
1	Components of respiratory system	4
2	Diagrammatic representation of pressure and volume changes during quiet inspiration	7
3	Static expiratory pressure-volume curves of lungs in normal subjects and subjects with severe emphysema and pulmonary fibrosis	8
4	Diffusion across alveolocapillary membrane	9
5	Standard Oxyhemoglobin Dissociation Curve showing the P50, and the SaO <sub>2</sub> at PaO <sub>2</sub> =80mmHg.	13
6	CO <sub>2</sub> dissociation curves	16
7	Lung volumes and some measurements related to the mechanics of breathing	22
8	High-resolution computed tomography HRCT examples of Reid's three forms of bronchiectasis	30
9	Pathologic process in the right middle lobe with mycobacterial infection	32
10	Multiple lung abscesses in the left lung	35
11	CT scan showing a cancerous tumor in the left lung	40
12a	Radiograph on postoperative day 1 after pneumonectomy shows pneumothorax in the postpneumonectomy space, a midline trachea, and slight congestion in the remaining right lung	45
12b	Radiograph on postoperative day 2 after pneumonectomy shows fluid in the lower one-third of the postpneumonectomy space	45
12c	Radiograph on postoperative day 14 after pneumonectomy shows that the air-fluid level has risen in the postpneumonectomy space	45



## List of Figures (Cont.)

<i><b>Fig.</b></i>	<i><b>Title</b></i>	<i><b>Page</b></i>
12d	Radiograph on postoperative day 30 after pneumonectomy shows total opacification of the postpneumonectomy space and elevation of the left hemidiaphragm.	46
13	Radiograph on right cardiac herniation after pneumonectomy	61
14	Pathophysiology of postpneumonectomy pulmonary edema	67
15	Pulmonary edema after right pneumonectomy	68
16	ARDS after right pneumonectomy	70
17	Pneumonia after left pneumonectomy	72
18a	Chest radiograph on postoperative day 18 after right pneumonectomy shows near complete opacification of the postpneumonectomy space	76
18b	Chest radiograph on postoperative day 20 shows recurrent air-fluid levels in the middle of the postpneumonectomy space	76
18c	Chest radiograph on postoperative day 22 shows tension pneumothorax, subcutaneous emphysema (*), and a leftward shift of mediastinal structures, including the trachea	77
18d	Axial CT image demonstrates a bronchopleural fistula	77
19	Axial CT image on postoperative day 52 after left pneumonectomy showing empyema	80
20	Axial CT image showing postpneumonectomy syndrome after right pneumonectomy	85

## **Introduction**

Pneumonectomy or surgical removal of an entire lung, as well as, lobectomy are performed most frequently for management of bronchogenic carcinoma (*Shields et al.,2005*).

It may rarely be performed for pulmonary metastases or for a variety of benign diseases, such as inflammatory lung disease, traumatic lung injury, congenital lung disease, and bronchial obstruction with a destroyed lung (*Shields et al.,2005*).

Major lung resection causes anatomical and physiological changes with affection of lung function and consequently lung volumes. (*Kopec et al.,1998*).

Postoperative complications after pneumonectomy are relatively frequent and significant, including cardiovascular, respiratory, pleural, gastrointestinal and other non specific complications based on the timing of occurrence and the factors that affect their incidence (*Ferretti et al., 2009*).

A number of potential complications that involve the respiratory system, as post-pneumonectomy pulmonary edema with incidence ranging between 4% and 7% and evidence indicates that prevention is the most important therapeutic measure. Patients tend to have greater risk of pneumonia after thoracotomy, but few studies have provided a high level of evidence for the usefulness of antibiotic prophylaxis in chest surgery (*Izquierdo et al., 2005*).

Pleural space complications such as significant bleeding, empyema, bronchopleural fistula, esophagopleural fistula and pneumothorax are common **(Wolfe and Lewis., 2002).**

A number of complications involving the cardiovascular system, as postoperative arrhythmias (most common is supraventricular arrhythmias) which increase mortality, although evidence does not suggest a need for systematic prophylactic treatment of patients who will undergo lung resection **(Izquierdo et al., 2005).**

Complications after pneumonectomy require a unique approach to management, and mortality can be minimized by early detection and aggressive treatment **(Sugarbaker et al.,2004).**

## **Aim of the Work**

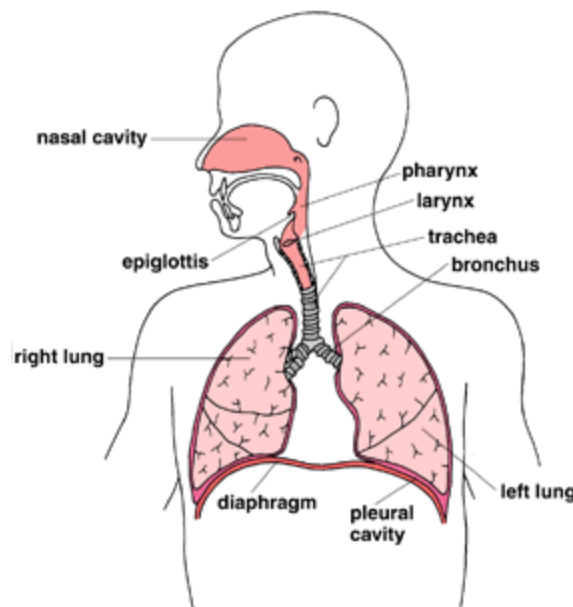
The aim of the work is to highlight the postoperative complications after pneumonectomy, their detection and management.

## **Anatomy And Physiology Of The Respiratory System**

The primary function of the respiratory system is gas exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide which is done by the lungs (*Ganong, 1991*).

### **Anatomy of the respiratory system:**

The respiratory system can be divided into an upper respiratory tract (conducting zone) and a lower respiratory tract (respiratory zone) as shown in Fig.(1).



**Fig.(1):** Components of respiratory system.  
(*Widmaier et al., 2005*)

### **Upper respiratory tract/conducting zone:**

The upper respiratory tract begins with the nares (nostrils) of the nose, which open into the nasopharynx. The primary functions of the nasal passages are to filter, warm, moisten, and provide resonance in speech. The nasopharynx opens into the oropharynx, then air entering the oropharynx passes into the laryngopharynx, the larynx, down into the trachea (*Widmaier et al., 2005*).

### **Lower respiratory tract/respiratory zone:**

The trachea divides at the level of the carina into the right and left main bronchi one to each lung. Each bronchus is divided into: Primary, secondary, and tertiary divisions. In total, the bronchi divide 16 times into even smaller bronchioles.

The bronchioles lead to the respiratory zone of the lungs, which consists of respiratory bronchioles, alveolar ducts, and the alveoli, the multi-lobulated sacs in which most of the gas exchange occurs (*Widmaier et al., 2005*).

The alveolar surface is lined with different types of cells which are:

**Type I pneumocyte:** Also called small alveolar cell or alveolar type I cell. It is the major cell type lining the alveolar surfaces. These cells represent only 40% of the alveolar lining cells, but are spread so thinly that they cover about 90 to 95% of the surface. These cells are connected to one another by tight junctions. Gaseous exchange takes place through the type I cells.

**Type II pneumocyte:** It is the other major alveolar cell (also called the great alveolar cell because of its size, granular pneumocytes, alveolar type II).

Though they constitute 60% of the cells lining the alveoli, they form only 5-10% of the surface. Type II pneumocytes serve two important functions:

- (i) They serve as stem cells for themselves and the type I cells. i.e. they possess proliferative power and may replace damaged types of cells.
- (ii) They secrete a fluid which acts as a surfactant by reducing surface tension, and thereby prevents the collapse of the alveoli during expiration (*Baritussio et al., 1994*).

**Alveolar Macrophages:(dust cells)** The alveolar macrophages are derived from monocytes that exit the blood vessels in the lungs. The resident alveolar macrophages can undergo limited mitoses to form additional macrophages.

### **Pulmonary surfactant:**

Pulmonary surfactant is a surface-active lipoprotein complex (phospholipoprotein) formed by type II alveolar cells. The proteins and lipids that surfactant comprises have both a hydrophilic region and a hydrophobic region. The main lipid component of surfactant is dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine (DPPC) (*Hills and Brian,1999*).

### **Function of surfactant:**

Pulmonary surfactant reduces surface tension inside the alveoli which leads to:

- Increase pulmonary compliance.
- Prevent atelectasis (collapse of the lung) at the end of expiration.
- Facilitate recruitment of collapsed airways (*Hills and Brian,1999*).