

Evaluation of Two Techniques in Management of Anterior Wall Frontal Sinus Fractures

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To be human is to be dependent. We depend on the efforts of many other men and women. We build on the past, we are the products of our parents, our teachers, our colleagues, and the challenges that GOD gives us....

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Evaluation of Two Techniques in Management of Anterior Wall Frontal Sinus Fractures

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Key Words: Frontal sinus- Sinus obliteration- Transantral drainage

Abstract:

Introduction: Frontal sinus fractures pose an interesting and challenging problem, as optimal treatment strategies for the management of frontal sinus fractures remain controversial. These fractures peculiarity is that a wrong treatment not only could it encompass functional or aesthetical problems but also more dangerous complications. Various techniques have been advocated to repair or remove the frontal sinus that largely depends on the mechanism and extent of the injury and the status of the nasofrontal duct (NFD). These operations include ablation, open reduction and internal fixation of the anterior table, obliteration, and cranialization. The lack of consensus regarding the treatment options may provide a motive to compare two different modalities in management of the comminuted anterior table fractures of the frontal sinus affecting nasofrontal duct i.e. obliteration of the sinus versus achieving transantral drainage to assess the efficacy of different modalities.

Patients & Methods: This study was carried out on 20 patients selected from the Oral & Maxillofacial department, Faculty of Oral & Dental Medicine, Cairo University and the Cranio & Maxillofacial department, Naser Institute. The selected patients suffered of unilateral anterior wall fracture of their frontal sinuses approximating the nasofrontal duct and having intact posterior walls of their frontal sinuses. The selected subjects were randomly divided into two groups, **Group I:** (sinus Obliteration Group). **Group II:** Transantral Drainage Group where inter sinus septum (a) was removed to the level of the sinus floor and thus rendering the injured sinus in patent communication with the intact sinus. Clinical & radiographic evaluations were carried out at immediate post-operative, and at 6 & 12 months post operatively. Radiographic evaluation of the cases was done using computerized tomography (CT) scanning.

Results: In the current study 90% of the included subjects were males and the mean age was 34years. In 60% of the studied sample the frontal sinus fracture was associated with other maxillofacial fractures, and in 40% of the series the frontal sinus fracture was unassociated with other fractures. In the present study the obliteration group has revealed a rate of total 40% complications. Whereas transantral drainage group in the current study has revealed a rate of 30 % complications, When the two groups were inter-related the difference was statistically insignificant this may point out the lack of consensus regarding the best management modality. The results of this study indicate that a functioning sinus can be preserved in the majority of patients with frontal sinus fractures. Also it could be concluded that frontal sinus obliteration will continue to be a workhorse operation in trauma management of anterior wall frontal sinus fracture. Moreover, Transantral Drainage could be a valid and conservative alternative in management of unilateral anterior frontal sinus fractures.

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CONTENTS

<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Review of Literature.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Aim of the Study.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Patients and Methods.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Results.....</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Discussion</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Conclusions and Recommendations.....</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>English Summary.....</i>	<i>98</i>
<i>References.....</i>	<i>103</i>
<i>Arabic Summary.....</i>	<i>126</i>

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1:	<i>Showing an algorithm for the management of frontal sinus fracture</i>	11
Figure 2:	<i>Shows axial CT cut demonstrating depressed Anterior wall of frontal sinus</i>	28
Figure 3:	<i>Shows 3D reconstruction demonstrating Comminuted anterior wall fracture of frontal sinus</i>	28
Figure 4:	<i>Shows 3D reconstruction demonstrating Fracture through the medial one third of the orbital Rim passing through the orbital roof.</i>	29
Figure 5:	<i>Shows 3D reconstruction demonstrating Depressed fracture involving the medial half of the sinus And the orbital roof.</i>	29
Figure 6:	<i>Shows axial CT cut demonstrating displaced fracture equal To the outer cortex thickness.</i>	30
Figure 7:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing coronal incision marking.</i>	33
Figure 8:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing incision and application of Raney clamps.</i>	33
Figure 9:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing the reflected coronal flap.</i>	34
Figure 10:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing incision for pericranial flap.</i>	34

Figure 11:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing reflection of pericranial flap.</i>	35
Figure 12:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing depressed fracture of the outer table of the frontal sinus.</i>	35
Figure 13:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing template for the fracture outlines.</i>	36
Figure 14:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing removal of anterior sinus wall.</i>	36
Figure 15:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing removed bone segment that is kept wet</i>	37
Figure 16:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing frontal sinus after removal of the lining mucosa in Group I.</i>	39
Figure 17:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing bone graft harvested from anterior Iliac crest.</i>	39
Figure 18:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing obliteration of the sinus with bone graft in Group I.</i>	40
Figure 19:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing reconstruction of the outer table of the sinus after obliteration in Group I.</i>	40
Figure 20:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing reconstruction of the outer table using titanium mesh in case of lost bony segments due to comminution.</i>	41
Figure 21:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing the fractured anterior sinus wall in a case of Group II.</i>	43
Figure 22:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing thorough irrigation and debridement after removal of anterior sinus wall in Group II</i>	43

Figure 23:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing naso-frontal duct orifice in Group II.</i>	44
Figure 24:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing removal of the septum in Group II.</i>	44
Figure 25:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing complete removal of the septum in Group II.</i>	45
Figure 26:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing complete removal of the septum in Group II.</i>	45
Figure 27:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing reconstruction of the anterior table of the frontal sinus in Group II.</i>	46
Figure 28:	<i>Intraoperative photograph showing refinement of the outer table contour using titanium mesh in Group II.</i>	46
Figure 29:	Showing percentages of the mechanism of injury of the included subjects	51
Figure 30:	Showing the percentages of fracture patterns of the included subjects	52
Figure 31:	Showing percentages of open and closed fractures of the included subjects	52
Figure 32:	Showing clinical evaluation of the two groups immediate post-operative	55
Figure 33:	Showing clinical evaluation of the two groups 6 months post-operatively	57
Figure 34:	Showing clinical evaluation of the two groups 12 months post-operatively	59
Figure 35:	Showing radiographic evaluation of the two groups immediate post-operative	61

Figure 36:	Showing radiographic evaluation of the two groups 6 months post-operatively	63
Figure 37:	Showing radiographic evaluation of the two groups 12 months post-operatively	65
Figure 38:	<i>Preoperative 3D and axial CT cuts showing frontal sinus anterior table fracture of the left side of a case in Group I.</i>	68
Figure 39:	<i>Coronal and axial CT cuts showing the same fracture</i>	68
Figure 40:	<i>Axial and coronal CT cuts showing complete obliteration of the left sinus with bone graft (immediate post operative) in Group I</i>	69
Figure 41:	<i>3D and sagittal CT cuts showing outer table reconstruction in Group I (Immediate post operative)</i>	70
Figure 42:	<i>Axial and coronal CT cuts 6 months post operative in Group I. Note areas of bone resorption.</i>	71
Figure 43:	<i>Axial and coronal CT cuts 12 months postoperative in Group I. Note significant bone resorption.</i>	72
Figure 44:	<i>Intra operative photographs showing pus inside the frontal sinus (12 months post operative) in a case of Group I</i>	73
Figure 45:	<i>Preoperative clinical photographs of a case of Group I. Note the frontal depression over the fractured sinus.</i>	74
Figure 46:	<i>Showing post-operative clinical photograph of a case of Group I.</i>	75

Figure 47:	<i>Preoperative 3D and axial CT cuts showing frontal sinus anterior table fracture of the left side of a case in Group II.</i>	76
Figure 48:	<i>Showing immediate post operative reconstruction of case in Group II</i>	77
Figure 49:	<i>Showing coronal CT cut for the frontal sinus after removal of the of the inter sinus septum in Group II</i>	77
Figure 50:	<i>Axial and sagittal CT cuts showing fluid level in the sinus immediate post operative in a case of Group II</i>	78
Figure 51:	<i>Coronal and axial CT cuts 6 months post operative of Group II .Note resolution of the fluid and complete ventilation of the sinus.</i>	79
Figure 52:	<i>Coronal and axial CT cuts 12 months post operative of Group II. Note complete sinus ventilation.</i>	80
Figure 53:	<i>Showing pre operative and 12 months post operative photographs of a case in Group II .</i>	81

List of Tables

	<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
Table 1:	Demographic data of the patients selected for the study.....	50
Table 2:	Clinical evaluation of Group I immediate postoperative.....	55
Table 3:	<i>Clinical evaluation of Group II immediate post-operative</i>	56
Table 4:	Clinical evaluation of Group I 6 months post operatively	57
Table 5:	Clinical evaluation of Group II 6 months post operatively	58
Table 6:	Clinical evaluation of Group I 12 months post operatively	60
Table 7:	Clinical evaluation of Group II 12 months post operatively.....	60
Table 8:	Clinical evaluation of Group I immediate post-operative.....	62
Table 9:	Clinical evaluation of Group II immediate post-operative	63
Table10:	Rradiographic evaluation of Group I 6 months post operatively	64

Table 11:	Radiographic evaluation of GroupII 6 months post operatively.....	65
Table 12:	Radiographic evaluation of Group I 12 months post-operatively	66
Table 13:	Radiographic evaluation of Group II 12 months post operatively.....	67

Introduction

Though incidence of frontal sinus fractures are relative low when compared to the remaining types of fractures involving the cranio-maxillofacial district. These fractures pose an interesting and challenging problem, as the optimal treatment strategies for the management of frontal sinus fractures remain controversial.

In order to reduce the risk of infectious-related complications and to keep the functional and aesthetical alterations at minimum, the necessity to recognize precociously and rightly the type of fracture and the intervening involvement of the adjacent structures to perform a proper surgical treatment according to the specific case, would present an integral part of the maxillofacial practice.

Various techniques have been advocated to repair the frontal sinus fractures. Yet with no consensus on when and if surgical intervention is to be carried out.

With the improvement in diagnostic imaging and surgical technology, a wide variety of philosophies, protocols, and procedures are suggested in the treatment of frontal sinus injuries, each with the goal to provide an esthetic outcome, restore function, and prevent complications.

Maxillofacial surgeon will always peruse treatment modalities that could result in predictable healing, favorable esthetics, and few short-term complications for the majority of patients.

Frontal sinus obliteration is considered the corner stone of frontal sinus fracture management, yet never short of complications. Transantral drainage could present an alternative approach that can be re-presented as being not a novel technique but rather as an attempt to provide a practical, safe rationale for the management of frontal sinus injuries.

Review of Literature:

Embryology & Anatomy:

Development of the frontal sinus begins between the ages of two and four when the anterior ethmoid cells expand into the frontal bone. The frontal sinus occupies the junction between the splanchnocranium and the neurocranium, placed between the anterior cranial fossa and the nasoorbito-ethmoid region. The frontal sinuses are radiographically evident by ages five to eight and reach full adult size between ages twelve and eighteen. The frontal sinus varies markedly in its development. Occasionally, it may be poorly developed or markedly pneumatized to involve adjacent bone. Approximately 10% of the population has only a unilateral development of the frontal sinus, and in 4% of the population, there is bilateral agenesis (*Hollinshead, 1982- Gonty et al., 1999*).

The anatomy of the frontal sinus is highly variable. They are funnel shaped sinuses and communicate with the middle meatus via an hourglass-like narrowing called the nasofrontal duct. Mucus in the frontal sinus flows up the medial wall, laterally across the roof, medially along the floor, and down the nasofrontal duct into the middle meatus. The frontal sinus has a thick, strong arch-shaped anterior wall, a thin fragile floor and posterior wall. The floor is the roof of the orbit. The posterior wall forms the anteroinferior wall of the anterior cranial fossa. The superior sagittal sinus emanating from the foramen cecum lies directly against the posterior wall of the frontal sinus in its early course, rendering it vulnerable to injury in penetrating injuries or fracture dislocations of the posterior wall. Rupture is fortunately uncommon because the dura is tough and resilient. The sinus commonly has a vertical septum placed approximately in