

Epidermoid and Dermoid Cysts of the Head and Neck

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Epidermoid and dermoid cysts (ECs and DCs) are congenital anomalies occurring in areas of embryonic fusion. Their incidence in the head and neck region is low and ranges from 1.6% to 7%. The aim of this study is to report on the clinical characteristics, treatment, and outcome of 22 patients from a single-institution experience. A retrospective analysis of patients treated for ECs and DCs of the head and neck over a 12-year period was performed. The present study included 22 patients (male/female ratio 1:1). The mean age of presentation was 11.68 years. The lesions were distributed in the orbital regions in 7 (31.82%) patients, auricular regions in 6 (27.27%), neck regions in 5 (22.73%), floor of the mouth in 3 (13.64%), and nose in 1 (4.55%). Complete surgical excision was performed as a definitive treatment method in 21 patients (95.45%). The mean size of the excised lesions was 21.36mm at the widest length (range: 10–70 mm). On the basis of histopathological examinations, 15 (71.43%) lesions were classified as ECs and 6 (28.57%) as DCs. Post-operative complications were noted in 3 (14.29%) patients, 2 (9.52%) with recurrences and 1 (4.76%) with hypertrophic scarring. All of these patients were successfully cured after a second surgery. The ECs and DCs of the head and neck present an interesting diagnostic and therapeutic challenge. Successful management depends on a thorough knowledge of their clinical and radiological features.

Key Words: epidermoid and dermoid cysts, head, neck