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Current role and outcome of surgery in management of thoracic tuberculosis

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Background: Tuberculosis is still a worldwide disease. Medical treatment is essential, but surgery plays an increasing role in the diagnosis and treatment of various thoracic tuberculous lesions.

Aim: To present and analyze the results of surgical treatment of thoracic tuberculous cases, and to determine the indications and complications of thoracoscopic and traditional surgical interventions.

Methods: Retrospective analysis of all thoracic tuberculosis cases, pulmonary or extra-pulmonary, was performed on 316 patients diagnosed and treated surgically by thoracoscopic or traditional thoracic interventions, in the department of thoracic surgery at Al-Assad University Hospital in Damascus, Syria, from January 1992 to May 2012.

Results: Pulmonary tuberculous cases compose 33.8% vs. 66.2% extra-pulmonary cases (pleural 40.8%, mediastinal lymph nodes 12.6%, chest wall 9.1%, pericardial 3.8%). The proportion of thoracoscopic interventions was 37%: Majority of them were diagnostic (61.5%), whereas the proportion of traditional thoracic interventions was 63%: majority of them were therapeutic (75.4%) to manage complicated or neglected or incorrectly treated cases. The diagnosis of tuberculosis was not confirmed in 81% of patients at admittance. The majority of cases (88.9%) had active tuberculosis vs. 11.1% only had sequela of previous tuberculous infection. Morbidity rate was 9.2% and mortality rate was 1.3%.

Conclusion: Surgery must have a more significant role in the diagnosis and treatment of thoracic tuberculosis, with acceptable morbidity and mortality. Thoracoscopy is considered a selective mini-invasive option for diagnosing and treating these cases.

Biography

Khaldoon Abo Dakka has completed his PhD in Thoracic Surgery in 2012, from Damascus University. He has a Master degree in Thoracic Surgery in 2007. He is an active member of the Syrian Thoracic Association since 2007 and a Member of the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons since 2010. He has published three papers in the *Damascus University Journal of Health Sciences*.

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