

Harumanis temptation: A case of penetrating Neck injury

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Introduction:

Penetrating neck injuries can be deadly dangerous if not managed timely as it may compromise airway and neurovascular structures surround it. We demonstrated a fortunate case of penetrating neck injury involving elderly which spared his airway and vascular components.

Case description:

A 73-year-old, male had a history of fall from a tree while trying to pluck mangoes. Post fall, the tree branch stabbed over his left submandibular region. Post trauma patient complaint of pain over left jaw and worsened upon swallowing. At emergency department, patient was alert, no stridor or hoarseness of voice. His vital signs were stable. Physical examination identified an intact tree branch with sharp edge penetrating from left submandibular to left floor of mouth. No active bleeding at site of penetration was observed. Intra-orally the other end of tree branch at left floor of the mouth and abutting left ventral surface of the tongue and hematoma present. Cervical Computed tomography showed penetrating wound with hypodensed foreign body at left lower mandible extending to left side floor of mouth with depth of 5.8cm penetration through left platysma muscle, left anterior belly of digastric and left myoglossus muscles. Early airway assessment and patient stabilization was

done. Subsequently, case was referred to dental department for surgical repair.

Discussion:

Penetrating neck injury accounts for 5-10% of all trauma cases. Major vascular and neurological structures span the short gap between the head and the torso, including spinal cord, the esophagus, and the carotid and vertebral arteries, if unrecognized neck injuries easily fatal and account of rapid exsanguination or airway occlusion and asphyxiation. In this patient, he was lucky that penetrating injury didn't involve major structures and nearly escaped from "death". As demonstrated from clinical findings of our patient, no major injury involved. Our patient was managed by multidisciplinary team.

Conclusion:

It is important to keep respiratory tract unobstructed and major vessels not involved. Early surgical interventions may salvage the life of the patient. It is important to identify site of the neck injury to organize management of the patient and follow algorithm as per protocols.

Keywords : Penetrating, neck injury, trauma