



Bleeding from the Ductus Parotideus Following Parotidectomy

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Although parotidectomy is a common surgical procedure in otolaryngology, post-operative complications with varying degrees of severity may occur [1,2]. We present a case of bleeding from the Stensen's duct following superficial parotidectomy for pleomorphic adenoma. To the best of our knowledge, this unusual complication of parotid surgery has not previously been described.

Patient Description

A 25 year old man underwent superficial parotidectomy for mixed tumor, as described by Kaplan and Johns [1]. Since the tumor was excised with the superficial lobe of the gland, meticulous hemostasis was performed. The wound was sutured with two layers and drained. The post-operative course was uneventful. The drain was removed and the patient was discharged 48 hours after surgery. Intensive bleeding from Stensen's duct occurred on the fourth postoperative day, continuing on and off for 6 consecutive hours [Figure]. All blood coagulation tests were normal. No hematoma or infection was seen in the wound. The bleeding gradually decreased after mouthwashes with cool water. The histologic evaluation of the excised tumor revealed a well-encapsulated mixed tumor measuring 2.7 x 3.5 cm.



Bleeding from the Stensen's duct (arrows).

Comment

Extensive bleeding from the parotid duct is a very rare complication of parotid surgery, and in our experience comprises 0.1% (1 of 873 operations). Minor bleeding through the ductus parotideus following superficial parotidectomy may be more common, but since it resolves spontaneously it is unnoticed by both patients and medical staff.

It is our supposition that unligated Stensen's duct could have been the reason for the complication, a condition that is usually self-limited and does not require revision of the wound.

References

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The French people are incapable of regicide

1789, King Louis XVI of France, who was beheaded by guillotine