The incidence of infection for adults undergoing supra-tentorial craniotomy for tumours without hair removal.

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Abstract

AIMS & OBJECTIVES: The aim of the study was to look at the infection rate in adults undergoing craniotomies without hair removal and compare the results with the usual practice of pre-operative shaving/clipping.

MATERIALS & METHODS: One-hundred consecutive adult patients who had elective supra-tentorial craniotomy for tumour were studied prospectively. A uniform policy of performing surgery without hair removal was adopted. Patients were followed up prospectively to look for surgical site infection. The rate of infection was determined and the results were compared with the published data on similar procedures where hair removal was carried out before surgery.

RESULTS: A total of three patients developed surgical-site infection. One infection occurred in the glioma and two in the meningioma subgroup. The rate of infection is comparable to the published figures where pre-operative hair removal was performed routinely.

CONCLUSIONS: Cranial surgery with hair left in place does not pre-dispose to an increased infection risk for adults undergoing tumour surgery.

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