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Asymmetrical asymptomatic tonsils

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The relationship between asymmetrical tonsils and malignancy is still unclear. Although asymmetry is a common risk factor for malignancy, several studies suggest that this is not the case for asymptomatic asymmetrical tonsils. Despite this, current practice for these patients is tonsillectomy. This retrospective study aims to investigate the rate of malignancy in patients with asymptomatic asymmetrical tonsils and evaluate the clinical accuracy of our assessment of asymmetry in tonsils. We reviewed 100 post-tonsillectomy patients histology ranging from October 2014 to September 2015 investigating patient demographics, clinical assessment of tonsil asymmetry, histological assessed size and volume of the tonsils and the final diagnosis. Any patients with symptomatic tonsils (such as ulceration) were excluded from the study leaving us with a sample size of 43. The results demonstrated no cases of malignancy, with all post-tonsillectomy patients having benign reactive hyperplasia on histology. Of the tonsils deemed clinically asymmetrical, only 79% were correct histologically. These findings therefore question the need for tonsillectomy in this particular group. Additionally, they demonstrate that clinical examination alone has poor sensitivity for determining tonsil asymmetry. We believe that pre-operative MRI could be beneficial in more accurately assessing tonsil asymmetry.

Biography

Joseph Colclough has completed his Medical degree (MBChB) from Glasgow in 2014 with honors. During this time, he has completed his BSc researching viral vectors affinity for endovascular tissue. He is presently an FY1 Trainee Doctor at Northwick Park Hospital in Harrow.

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