ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

Objectives

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to evaluate YouTube as a patient information source on pediatric tonsillectomy. Only 3.2% of these videos were considered to be very useful and of these, physicians posted the majority. Most videos were categorized as somewhat useful or not useful (71.9%). The most useful videos were identified with the search term PT; however, 23 out of 61 results from this search (37.7%) were excluded because of non-relevant content. Patients or their caregivers may not use the temporal regularity when searching online resources.

METHODS

YouTube was searched on July 31, 2012 for videos containing relevant information about tonsillectomies in pediatric patients. The following search terms were used: pediatric tonsillectomy (PT), tonsillectomy (T), and tonsil surgery (TS). Non-English videos were excluded. On the assumption that no user would go beyond the first three pages for a specific search term, only the videos on these pages were evaluated. Two physician reviewers (J.S. and S.N.) independently assessed each video for characteristics (duration, number of views, days since upload, likes/dislikes), content (usefulness, misleading), and source (patient experience, surgical technique, physician, news report). The authors created a checklist for evaluating usefulness (Table 1). At present, no validated tool for this purpose exists in the literature. Discrepancies were resolved by consensus.

RESULTS

The search identified 254 videos (search terms PT=86, T=1880, TS=628). After limiting the review to the first three pages of search results and excluding irrelevant videos, 156 videos were reviewed (PT=38, T=59, TS=59). Descriptive statistics are listed in Table 2. Only five videos were very useful (3.2%). Most videos were somewhat useful (39.2%) or not useful (32.7%). Three videos were misleading (1.9%). Physician sourced information was found to be at least moderately useful. Patient experience videos were the predominant source of videos categorized as not useful (Figure 1). The search term PT yielded the highest percentage of very useful (80%) and the lowest percentage of not useful videos (5.9%) (Figure 2).

CONCLUSIONS

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to evaluate the usefulness of YouTube as a patient source of information for pediatric tonsillectomy. Only 3.2% of these videos were considered to be very useful and of these, physicians posted the majority. Most videos were categorized as somewhat useful or not useful (71.9%). The most useful videos were identified with the search term PT; however, 23 out of 61 results from this search (37.7%) were excluded because of non-relevant content. Patients or their caregivers may not use the temporal regularity when searching online resources.

REFERENCES