Enhancing Cochlear Implant Patient Experience with No Shaving and Early Activation

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Educational Objective: At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants should be able to appreciate the ability to safely perform cochlear implantation without any shaving and with activation at 1-2 weeks postoperatively.

Objective: Preoperative hair shaving and delay of activation until a month or more postoperatively may negatively impact patient experience with cochlear implantation. The objective of this study is to determine if cochlear implantation can be safely performed with no shaving and with activation at 1-2 weeks postoperatively.

Study Design: Retrospective case series.

Methods: Fourteen adult patients (15 ears) underwent cochlear implantation using a no-shave technique and a postauricular incision contained completely within the shadow of the auricle. Postoperatively, subjects underwent device activation at a mean of 9.7 days (range 5-16 days).

Results: No wound infections were noted. In all patients, the device was successfully activated at the early postoperative time point. Subjectively, patients were pleased with the lack of shaving and the ability to use their device within two weeks.

Conclusions: Cochlear implantation with no shaving and a completely concealed incision can be performed with a low risk of postoperative wound infection. In addition, early activation of the device at under 1.5 weeks postoperatively is feasible. Both components enhance patient experience and satisfaction.

Background

Only a small fraction of individuals who would benefit from cochlear implantation choose to undergo the procedure. As the indications continue to expand, the number of people meeting candidacy criteria will increase further. While often overlooked by surgeons, seemingly minor systematic details, such as amount of hair shaved and time until activation, may greatly influence patient decision making on whether (or where) to undergo implantation.1,2

Abstract

Methods

Results

Conclusions

References
