Highlights from the Current Issue: August 2016

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Welcome to the August 2016 issue of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery! As the summer winds down and back-to-school preparations are well underway, please let me offer a few interesting papers that will hopefully allow the season to linger for at least a few more weeks.

In the first paper this month, Hunter and colleagues offer a short communication about their experience with cochlear implantation in patients with canal wall down mastoidectomies. The authors examined the unique issues that must be considered when planning a cochlear implant in this group. In a small sample of patients with prior canal wall down mastoidectomies, the authors overclosed the external auditory meatus in 7 individuals and maintained open cavities in 2 others. At a mean follow-up of 36.7 months, the only complications reported were 2 dehiscences of the closed meatus among those 7 patients. The authors describe their experiences with this population and the implications of their treatment approaches.

In the second paper, Mandelbaum and colleagues evaluate the implementation of 3 laryngeal preservation techniques for the treatment of glottic carcinomas: endoscopic resection, open partial laryngectomy, and chemoradiation. Using the Nationwide Inpatient Sample Database, the authors analyzed 5499 patients with primary glottic cancer undergoing 1 of these 3 treatments. When adjusting for factors such as age, sex, race, comorbidities, and primary payer, endoscopic surgery was noted to have significantly decreased total direct charges and length of hospitalization when compared with either open partial laryngectomy or chemoradiation. The authors discuss the implications of these findings and the need for further research to validate their observations both in cost and in treatment outcomes.

In the third manuscript, Adelman and associates report their results of a systematic review examining the role of surgery in the treatment of patients with Samter’s triad, or aspirin-exacerbated respiratory disease (AERD). In this paper, the authors examined whether sinus surgery was associated with improved outcomes among patients with AERD, and they identified 18 papers that met study criteria. The results of their analysis demonstrated that patients with AERD who underwent sinus surgery had significant improvement in sinonasal and asthma symptoms scores, frequency of sinonasal and asthma exacerbations, appearance of the sinuses on endoscopy, and quality of life. The authors discuss the implications of their study for clinical practice.

In the next paper, Roland and colleagues examine the impact of pediatric hearing loss on the child’s quality of life. The authors conducted a systematic review that evaluated the relationship between these 2 factors, identifying 40 articles that met inclusion criteria for the review. After pooling their results, they identified statistically and clinically significant differences in quality-of-life scores among children with normal hearing and those with hearing loss, with findings most apparent in the social and school domains. The authors discuss the impact of pediatric hearing loss on childhood development and learning, and they stress the importance of focusing on these variables in future studies assessing hearing loss in the pediatric population.

Finally, Tay and colleagues examine the role of Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) DNA load and serology as screening tools for nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC). Using a case-control methodology and evaluating 293 newly diagnosed patients with NPC at a tertiary center in Singapore, the authors noted that NPC patients had significantly higher median EBV DNA loads when compared with their unaffected family members. When combining the use of increased EBV DNA load with a positive EBV early antigen serology titer, patients with NPC could be screened with excellent sensitivity and specificity. The authors discuss the implications of their findings and the use of these metrics as screening tools of NPC.

I hope you will find these papers interesting and enjoyable. Have a great August!

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