

Study of Bacteriological Profile of Post Operative Wound Infections in Surgical Wards in a Tertiary Care Hospital

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Abstract: Introduction: Surgical site infections (SSIs) are known to be one of the most common causes of nosocomial infections worldwide and account for nearly 20% to 25% of all nosocomial infections. Surgical site infection rates are reported to range from 2.5% to 41.9% globally resulting in high morbidity and mortality. Aims: To find the incidence and risk factors, bacteriological profile, and antibiogram for SSI in General Surgery department of a tertiary care hospital in Western Rajasthan. Methods: Culture and sensitivity of wounds of all the clinically suspected cases of SSI were taken. Bacterial identification and antimicrobial susceptibility were performed according to standard CLSI guidelines. Results: Out of total 117 pus specimens received in the Microbiology laboratory from 117 suspected SSI cases, 58 (49.57%) cases were culture positive and so these cases were considered as definitive cases of SSI giving a SSI rate of 2.69%. The most common organism isolated from SSI cases was *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (29.31%) followed by *E. coli* (25.86%). Among β – lactam antibiotics, all the gram negative bacilli showed maximum sensitivity towards Carbapenemes and Piperacillin-tazobactam. 25% staphylococcus aureus isolates were identified as Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).

Conclusion: High incidence rate of SSI in our setup emphasizes the need of quality surgical care which takes into consideration all the three important factors, i.e. host, environmental, and microorganism characteristics before doing any surgery.

Increasing resistance to commonly used antibiotics warrants the judicious use of antibiotics and establishment of antibiotic policy in the hospital.

Keyword: Surgical Site Infection, Surgical Wound.

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I. Introduction

World Health Organization (WHO) describes hospital acquired infections to be one of the major infectious diseases having a huge economic impact worldwide. These infections affect about 2 million people annually resulting in 5% to 15% of them requiring hospitalization. Surgical site infections (SSIs) are known as most common causes of nosocomial infections in worldwide which account for about 20% to 25% of all nosocomial infections. For increased postoperative morbidity worldwide Post operative wound infection is one of the major causes. However SSIs are not associated with a high case fatality rate but they cause significant morbidity and huge economic burden for prolonged hospital stay. In a world approximately 2% to 5% of the 16 million people undergoing surgical procedures each year develop surgical site infection and according to recent data two-thirds of patients who undergo operations. In developing countries the situation is more severe where resources are scarce and staffs are always in short supply. In nosocomial infection surgical site infections (SSI) are the third most commonly reported which approximately a quarter of all nosocomial infections. SSI still continues to be a major problem in infection control and surgical practices even in hospitals with most modern facilities. Post operative infection are usually caused by exogenous and/ or endogenous micro organisms enter the operative wound after the surgery or during the surgery which are usually more serious, appearing within five to seven days of surgery. SSIs are uncomplicated in which mainly involving skin and subcutaneous tissue or sometimes can progress to necrotizing infections. Surgical wound infection can be characterized by pain, tenderness, warmth, erythema, swelling and pus formation. In addition to these risk factors there is also involvement of virulence and the invasiveness of the organism physiological state of the wound tissue and the immunological integrity of the host are also important factors which determine whether infection can occur or not. Therefore in developing countries problem gets more complicated due to poor infection control practices, inappropriate use of antimicrobials and overcrowded hospitals.

Hence this observational study has been undertaken to estimate the incidence of SSI, the factors associated with the occurrence of SSI and their antibiotic sensitivities in general surgery hospital wards.

II. Material and method

The present study was conducted in the department of general surgery J.L.N.M.C.H Bhagalpur in collaboration with the department of microbiology. Patients for study were selected from among those admitted in the surgical wards and the surgical emergencies that underwent surgical procedure in this hospital. Each patient carefully assessed for the sign of surgical site infection till the day of discharge and followed up as an outpatient basis once a week for 30 days. The discharges from infected wounds were inoculated into blood agar and MacConkey's plate and also into a tube of brain heart infusion broth, which were incubated at 37°C overnight. If no growth was observed on plates, then subculture were made from BHI broth on solid media and processed as described above. Exclusion criteria were all the wound infections other than postoperative wounds were excluded from the study Results

Based on the type of setting in which the surgeries were done, there were 700 cases in elective setting out of which 52 got infected and 132 cases in emergency setting out of which 60 got infected. The overall rate of surgical site infection (SSI) was 11.7%.

The occurrence of SSI in emergency cases (23.8%) was found to be higher compared to elective cases (7.4%). Among the organism cultured gram negative organism predominate the picture (89%) and commonest was Escherchia coli (57.1%), followed by Klebsiella (18.9%), Pseudomonas (11.4%) and Staphylococcus aureus (8.6%). E.coli and Klebsiella from emergency cases showed resistance to ciprofloxacin (83%) and ceftriaxone (83%) and elective cases showed resistance of 70 % to ciprofloxacin and 40% to ceftriaxone. On statistical analysis of the data it was found that occurrence of SSI is significantly more in emergency cases (p value < 0.00001) which is highly significant.

Table 1: Distribution of cases based on the cases scenario

Type Of Class	No. Of Cases	No. Of Ssi	%
Emergency	132	60	23.8
Elective	700	52	7.4
Total	832	112	11.7

Table 2: SSI in different class of wounds

SNo	Class Of The Wound	No Of Cases (Emergency + Elective)	No Of Ssi	%
1.	Clean	150 (0+150)	14	5.6
2.	Clean Contaminated	456 (15+426)	36	7.9
3.	Contaminated	112 (108+16)	26	21.3
4.	Dirty	121 (116+4)	36	29.5

Out of all cases in which SSI occurred 35 were deep SSI and 21 were superficial SSI. The incidence of deep SSI was more in contaminated dirty groups than in the clean and clean contaminated groups. (p value of < 0.00002 which is highly significant). The incidence of superficial SSI was found not to be significant.

Table 3: Distribution of infected cases based on degree of SSI

Cases	Superficial SSI	Deep SSI	Total
Clean	4	3	7
Clean Contaminated	8	10	18
Contaminated	3	10	13
Dirty	6	12	18
Total	21	35	56

The presence of diabetes increased the occurrence of wound infections. The percentages of surgical wound in diabetic getting infected were 42.3% and non-diabetic were 9.4% which is statically highly significant.

Table No 4: Distribution of SSI among diabetics and non diabetics

		No of cases	No of SSI	% of infection
Diabetic	Elective	56	5	17.8
	Emergency	16	6	75
Nondiabetic	Elective	344	21	6.5
	Emergency	236	24	20.3

The number of SSI increased as the duration of surgery also increased. The surgeries in the abdominal and perineal regions show more infections rate. Also surgeries on limbs show increased infection rate due to decreased blood supply. The cleaner and well perfuse area of head, neck and thorax show decreased infection rate. It was observed that when procedure wise risk of SSI was analyzed, the risk was found to be

Study of Bacteriological Profile of Post Operative Wound Infections in Surgical Wards in..
higher in the contaminated cases and emergency surgeries.

Among the organisms cultured from various swabs taken the gram negative bacteria were 86% and gram positive were 14%. Among them the individual organism cultured were Escherichia Coli (57.1%), Pseudomonas (11.4%), Klebsiella (18.9%) and Staphylococcus aureus (8.6%). On Gram staining in emergency cases out of total 22, 3 were Gram positive and 19 were Gram negative and in elective cases out of 13 cases 1 was Gram positive and 12 were Gram negative.

The organism isolated from infected cases in Elective cases showing positive culture the type bacteria isolated were E.coli 8, Pseudomonas 2, Klebsiella 2, Staphylococcus aureus 3 and in 11 cases no growth was seen. In Emergency cases showing positive culture the type bacteria isolated were E.coli 12, Pseudomonas 2, Klebsiella 5, Staphylococcus aureus 1 and in 10 cases no growth was seen.

Table 5: Distribution of bacterial isolate among emergency and elective cases

S.No.	Class of wound	No. of cases (emergency)	No. of cases (elective)	No. of SSI (emergency)	No. of SSI (elective)	Organisms	No. of SSI (emergency)	No. of SSI (elective)
1	Clean	0	250	0	14	E.coli	0	2
						Pseudomonas	0	0
						Staph.aureus	0	6
						Klebsiella	0	2
						Sterile	0	4
2	Clean Contaminated	15	213	5	13	E.coli	0	4
						Pseudomonas	2	2
						Staph.aureus	2	0
						Klebsiella	2	4
						Sterile	4	16
3	Contaminated	54	8	9	4	E.coli	10	6
						Pseudomonas	0	
						Staph.aureus	0	
						Klebsiella	4	2
						Sterile	4	
4	Dirty	57	4	16	2	E.coli	14	4
						Pseudomonas	2	
						Staph.aureus		
						Klebsiella	4	
						Sterile	12	

III. Discussion

Post-operative wound infection still remains one of the most important causes of morbidity and is one of the most common nosocomial infection¹⁷ in surgically treated patients. In the present study, an attempt has been made to know the various bacterial flora responsible for surgical site infections and their antibiogram susceptibility pattern. The rate of SSI varies greatly worldwide and from hospital to hospital. The rate of SSI varies from 2.5% to 41.9% as per different studies.¹⁸⁻²¹ The incidence of SSI in the present study is 2.69% even though high, is in agreement with the various studies.

The most common organism isolated from SSI cases in the present study was *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (29.31%) followed by *E.coli* (25.86%). Ramesh et al 2013²² reported *E. coli* (20.8%) as the most common organism isolated followed by *S. aureus* (16.1%) from SSI cases. Whereas some studies also revealed *Staphylococcus aureus* as the most common organism isolated from SSI.^{19,22} The high incidence of gram-negative organisms in the post operative wound infections can be attributed to be acquired from patient's normal endogenous microflora²³

The present study also revealed that all the gram negative bacteria (GNBs) isolated were having a very high percentage of resistance to β -lactam antibiotics and also were showing a low susceptibility to cephalosporins and aminoglycosides. Extensive use of inappropriate antibiotics in empirical therapy can cause emergence of such resistant bacterial strains, especially in health care centers. These GNBs showed maximum

sensitivity towards piperacillin-tazobactam, imipenem and polymyxin B. This finding coincides well with Pateletal2011.²³

Our study also revealed that all the staphylococci showed maximum sensitivity towards Vancomycin and Linezolid which is again in accordance with Raza et al 2013.²⁴ In the present study we isolated 25% MRSA from SSI cases. Naik et al 2011²⁵ reported isolation of 9.6% of MRSA from SSI cases whereas Rameshetal2013²² reported isolation of 66.37% MRSA from SSI cases.

IV. Conclusion

A better Surveillance system for surgical site infection with feedback of appropriate data to surgeons is highly recommended to reduce the SSI rate in tertiary healthcare centres. Thus, every hospital needs to organize its infection control program. Failure to implement infection control policies and lack of awareness are the factors contributing to hospital infections and disease. Guidelines and protocols for basic infection control practices such as hand washing, written protocols of perioperative, intraoperative and post operative infection control practices should be widely available and adhered to.

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