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PAROTID TUMORS

The Loyola Center for Cranial Base Surgery
Loyola Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

INTRODUCTION

Parotid tumors are relatively rare neoplasms that present as an enlarging mass beneath the skin of the cheek. Most parotid tumors are benign (85%), but the remaining 15% are potentially life-threatening, malignant tumors. Since 1987, we have evaluated and treated over 2000 patients with a variety of benign and malignant parotid tumors at the Loyola Center for Cranial Base Surgery.

CLINICAL EVALUATION

Parotid tumor patients require a complete head and neck physical examination along with radiologic evaluation using either a CT scan or, preferably, an MRI. Fine needle aspiration biopsy is used in selected patients. Benign parotid tumors usually grow slowly and without pain. Deep-lobe parotid tumors may grow silently, deep to the lower jaw (mandible). Malignant parotid tumors may cause facial or jaw pain, facial twitching or weakness, pain with chewing (trismus), or spread to lymph nodes in the neck or to other regions (i.e., lung, liver, brain).

TREATMENT

Benign parotid tumors are curable with parotidectomy and facial nerve dissection with preservation. Malignant parotid tumors may require surgery alone, or surgery with postoperative radiotherapy. Facial nerve reconstruction may involve direct repair, interposition nerve grafting, or microvascular free-tissue transfer. Intraoperative facial nerve monitoring helps reduce the risk of inadvertent neural injury.

EXPERIENCE

The Loyola Center for Cranial Base Surgery was established in 1987. We have evaluated over 2000 patients with parotid tumors in this 20-year period. The average surgical time is 1.5 hours and the majority of patients are discharged within 23 hours from admission. Most patients return to work after seven days with a one-year follow-up examination and MRI.

The facial nerve is anatomically and functionally preserved in 98% of patients with benign tumors. The recurrence rate for those with benign parotid tumors at our institution is 1%. Facial reanimation is successful in 95% of the patients with malignant parotid tumors who underwent facial nerve resection. The overall cure rate for our patients with malignant parotid tumors is 82%.

SUMMARY

A variety of benign and malignant parotid tumors have been evaluated and managed over a 20-year period in treating over 2000 such tumors. Our multidisciplinary approach toward the treatment of all parotid tumors has resulted in reduced operative time, a brief hospital stay, unsurpassed facial nerve results, and exceptional cure rates. We remain leaders in the research of this unique and uncommon tumor in an attempt to continually improve our clinical results.

For more information or to schedule a consultation, call 708-216-2118. In keeping with

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