

165 Impact of COVID-19 on management of Foreign Bodies in Otolaryngology

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Aim: The primary aim was to assess safety of Ear, nose and throat foreign body extraction during the coronavirus pandemic as this procedure is considered a potential aerosol generating procedure. The secondary aim was to evaluate the potential risks to patients if foreign body removal was delayed.

Method: A prospective study of 50 patients presenting to our unit with foreign bodies between March 2020 and August 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic was performed. All patients were seen within 1 week of referral. The sites and types of foreign bodies were studied and correlated with complications where present. We assessed the circumstances under which foreign body removal was performed and its effect on health care professionals.

Results: The most common age group was the paediatric age group (52%). The most frequent sites of foreign bodies were the Ears at 78% (39 patients), followed by the nose at 12% (26 patients). Non-organic foreign bodies (52%) were more prevalent than organic foreign bodies (48%). Removal was performed in 31 (62%) patients either in clinic or in theatre. However, 19 patients (38%) were managed conservatively adhering to the British Association for Paediatric Otolaryngology guidance. Only 2 patients developed complications secondary to retained non-organic aural foreign bodies. None of the patients with organic foreign bodies developed complications. No infection rates among medical staff managing these patients were identified.

Conclusions: Contrary to normal practice, it is safe to manage selective ENT foreign bodies in a semi-urgent manner allowing time to implement ample precautions to reduce infection risks.