

Retained Products of Conception following Caesareans as a Cause of Secondary Postpartum Haemorrhage

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Introduction

Secondary postpartum haemorrhage (SPPH) refers to any abnormal vaginal bleeding between 24 hours to 6 weeks postpartum and occurs in 2% of all deliveries. One of the known causes is retained products of conception (RPOC); however, there is relatively limited evidence pertaining to caesareans. The aim of this study is to provide insight into SPPH and the burden caused by RPOC post caesareans.

Methods

OBSDATA (RBWH obstetric and perinatal database) was accessed to identify patients re-admitted with SPPH within 6 weeks of delivery between 2014 and 2018 at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. This study included all women who gave birth after 20-weeks gestation or delivered a fetus above 400g.

Results

A total of 111 women were re-admitted with SPPH and of these, 30 women underwent caesarean sections. 10 (33%) were emergency caesareans and 20 (67%) elective caesareans. A statistically significant relationship was not identified between elective or emergency caesareans being more predisposed to retained products.

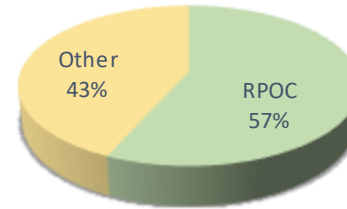


Fig. 1. Causes of SPPH post caesarean section

Other predominant cause of SPPH was identified to be endometritis, affecting 30% of this cohort. Pelvic ultrasound was the primary imaging choice to investigate causes of SPPH with 24 (80%) patients undergoing a scan.

In this cohort, 13 (76.5%) cases were managed surgically while 4 (23.5%) cases were managed medically. Surgical management included multiple surgical techniques with hysteroscopy, dilation and curettage being the predominant method of choice.

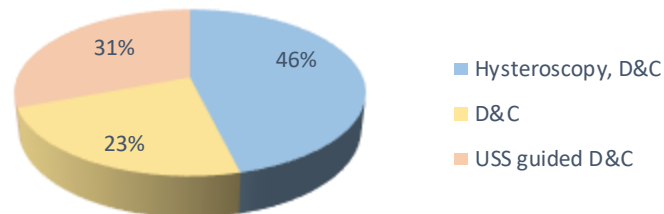


Fig. 1. Surgical methods for management of RPOC

Medical management included antibiotics with 100% of patients receiving oral antibiotics and 75% receiving intravenous antibiotics. One patient was administered a Syntocinon infusion. Average length of stay was 2.46 days for the surgical group and 1.25 days for the medically managed group.

Discussion

In the cohort examined, retained products of conception was the most common cause for secondary postpartum haemorrhage following caesareans. Management was predominantly through surgical intervention and most cases were histologically confirmed to be retained products.

References

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