

Introduction

Pediatric thyroid cancer is a rare disease. Compared with adults, epithelial-derived differentiated thyroid cancer (DTC), which includes papillary and follicular thyroid cancer, presents at more advanced stages in children and is associated with higher rates of recurrence.

Materials and Methods:

8 yr old male child presented change of voice, stridor on rest, breathlessness on lying down. Diagnosis of Papillary carcinoma of thyroid was made on FNAC of thyroid swelling planned for total thyroidectomy with bilateral functional neck dissection.

Investigations showed :

1. TFT was suggestive of hypothyroidism with TSH of 13.77mIU / L..
2. Neck X ray AP and lateral view showed tracheal compression
3. Indirect laryngoscopy showed right sided vocal cord palsy.
4. Ct Scan of Neck and Thorax showed :
 - a. Nodules in bilateral lobes of thyroid , largest being 12 * 12mm.
 - b. Multiple bilateral cervical, pretracheal , superior mediastinal, upper paratracheal nodes present , causing compression and narrowing of trachea at T 1 level.
 - c. Maximum narrowing at T 1 level – 3.4 mm

Difficult airway cart was kept ready. As the lesion was adherent to trachea, tracheostomy could not be done. Cricothyrotomy was attempted, but airway could not be accessed. Finally laryngo fissure was done and 6.0 mm cuffed endotracheal tube inserted and bilateral air entry and ventilation confirmed.

General anaesthesia with muscle relaxation was instituted and total thyroidectomy and bilateral functional neck dissection was done.

Child was shifted to post anaesthesia care unit with tracheostomy tube in situ. Child was administered supplemental oxygen with a T piece.

Post operative period was uneventful except for child developing symptomatic hypocalcemia which needed oral and intravenous calcium supplementation.

Discussion:

There has been a substantial increase in the number of WDTC cases referred to our institution in recent years with more advanced TNM staging at the time of initial presentation. Despite the advanced disease in some cases, both local regional control and short-term outcomes are excellent with comprehensive thyroidectomy surgery, appropriate therapeutic neck dissections followed by adjuvant therapy.