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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Characteristics** | **Pre-covid-19 pandemic cohort (n = 26)** | **Covid-19 pandemic cohort (n = 27)** | ***p-value*** |
| Duration of symptoms prior to presentation (days) |  |  |  |
| * Mean (+/-SD) | 3.25 (+/-1.98) | 5.96 (+/-5.66) | 0.0277 |
| * Median (IQR) | 2.5 (2, 4.75) | 4.5 (3, 7) |  |
| * Range | 1 – 7 | 1 – 25 |  |
| Antibiotic administration prior to presentation |  |  |  |
| * Yes - n (%) | 11 (42.3%) | 11 (40.7%) | 1 |
| * No - n (%) | 15 (57.7%) | 16 (59.3%) |  |
| Deep neck space abscess vs. inflammation only |  |  |  |
| * Abscess | 9 (34.6%) | 21 (77.8%) | <0.01 |
| * Inflammation only | 17 (65.4%) | 6 (22.2%) |  |
| Abscess volume (cm3) |  |  |  |
| * Mean (+/-SD) | 14.5 (+/-14.4) | 25.18 (+/-29.39) | 0.291 |
| * Median (IQR) | 6.63 (5.07, 26.06) | 10.51 (3.16, 44) |  |
| * Range | 3.06 – 33.6 | 1.19 – 99 |  |
| Complications of deep neck space infection |  |  |  |
| * Yes | 2 (7.7%) | 9 (33.3%) | 0.0394 |
| * No | 24 (92.3%) | 18 (66.7%) |  |
| Mediastinitis |  |  |  |
| * Yes | 3 (11.5%) | 4 (14.8%) | 1 |
| * No | 23 (88.5%) | 23 (85.2%) |  |
| Lemierre's syndrome |  |  |  |
| * Yes | 0 (0%) | 4 (14.8%) | 0.111 |
| * No | 26 (100%) | 23 (85.2%) |  |
| Mortality |  |  |  |
| * Yes | 1 (3.8%) | 2 (7.4%) | 1 |
| * No | 25 (96.2%) | 25 (92.6%) |  |
| Length of hospital admission (days) |  |  |  |
| * Mean (+/-SD) | 6.35 (+/-6.70) | 14.48 (+/-24.90) | 0.114 |
| * Median (IQR) | 4 (3, 6.75) | 5 (4, 12) |  |
| * Range | 1 – 29 | 2 – 120 |  |
| Intensive care admission |  |  |  |
| * Yes | 9 (34.6%) | 8 (29.6%) | 0.773 |
| * No | 17 (65.4%) | 19 (70.4%) |  |
| Duration of ITU stay (days) |  |  |  |
| * Mean (+/-SD) | 1.78 (+/-1.39) | 7.88 (+/-10.34) | 0.0992 |
| * Median (IQR) | 1 (1, 2) | 4.5 (3.75, 5.75) |  |
| * Range | 0 – 4 | 1 – 33 |  |
| Tracheostomy |  |  |  |
| * Yes | 1 (3.8%) | 7 (25.9%) | 0.0504 |
| * No | 25 (96.2%) | 20 (74.1%) |  |
| Management |  |  |  |
| * Medical management alone | 10 (38.5%) | 11 (40.7%) | 1 |
| * Bedside peritonsillar abscess drainage | 6 (23.1%) | 4 (14.8%) | 0.507 |
| * Transcervical drainage | 5 (19.2%) | 10 (37.0%) | 0.224 |
| * Transoral drainage | 5 (19.2%) | 2 (7.4%) | 0.250 |
| * Hot tonsillectomy | 0 (0%) | 3 (11.1%) | 0.236 |
| **Table 2 – hospital presentation, infection and patient management characteristics of included patients in the pre-covid-19 pandemic cohort (1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020) and covid-19 pandemic cohort (1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021).** | | | |