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Role of Surgery in Liver Abscess

Abdullah[1], Shoaib Ahmed Qureshi[1], Rehan Zarkoon[1], Muhammad Hanif Bugti[1], Syed Abdul Nasir[1], Sana Ullah Kakar[2]

[1]Department of Surgery, Sandman Provincial Hospital, Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.
[2]Baluchistan Institute of Psychiatry and Behiovral Sciences (BIPBS), Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.

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Corresponding Author: Sana Ullah Kakar, Baluchistan Institute of Psychiatry and Behiovral Sciences (BIPBS), Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.
Email: sanaullah786.kakar@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Background: Liver abscesses are localized pus collections in the liver, often resulting from various infections. They pose significant clinical challenges, with the potential for severe complications and adverse outcomes. **Objective:** This study aims to evaluate the role of surgical interventions in the management of liver abscesses, specifically within the patient population of Bolan Medical Complex, Quetta. It seeks to analyze surgical outcomes, complications, and patient recovery in comparison to other treatment modalities. **Methods:** A qualitative approach was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with 100 patients who underwent surgical procedures for liver abscesses at Bolan Medical Complex. The data were analyzed to identify patterns related to surgical efficacy and patient experiences. **Results:** The findings indicate that open drainage remains the most performed procedure, with a high success rate of 80% in achieving favorable outcomes. Complications occurred in 15% of cases, and the average length of hospital stay varied, with half of the patients being discharged within 1-3 days post-surgery. **Conclusion:** Surgical intervention plays a critical role in the management of liver abscesses, particularly in cases resistant to medical treatment. The study highlights the importance of careful patient selection and the benefits of surgical procedures in improving patient outcomes and quality of life..

INTRODUCTION

Although liver abscesses are not very prevalent, the serious consequences that might arise from them are a major obstacle for clinicians to overcome. The biliary system, portal vein, or hepatic artery are the usual entry points for bacterial, parasite, or fungal infections that cause localized collections of pus to form in the liver, a condition known as an abscess (Kumar et al., 2018). In situations where other therapies are ineffective or cause difficulties, surgery continues to play an essential role, even though diagnostic imaging, antimicrobial therapy, and minimally invasive techniques have advanced (Wu et al., 2020). Liver abscesses (LAs) are a major infectious consequence of the liver parenchyma that require a precise diagnosis and targeted treatment.

The majority of liver abscesses tend to be either pyogenic (caused by other types of bacteria) or amebic (caused by the anaerobic protozoan Entamoeba histolytica). The etiology of a LA can be tubercular or fungal in extremely uncommon instances. The hallmark of ALA, a non-suppurative liver infection, is the presence of thick brown acellular debris that is sterile and lacks any discernible odor (Priyadarshi RN, et al., 2022). In contrast, suppurative pus-filled liver infections caused by PLA usually test positive for culture.

Although most PLA is composed of polymicrobial organisms, some species, like Staphylococcus, Anaerobes, Klebsiella, and Escherichia coli, tend to be more prevalent. (Sabih DE and Akhondi H. 2024). Worldwide, the occurrence of LA has been steadily increasing (Grassel M, Yim D, Shriver J, Redlin T; 2022). Being male, older, diabetic, or with a compromised immune system increases a person's risk of contracting LA (Akhondi H & Sabih DE; 2024).

Geographical factors influence the prevalence of ALA; it is more common in tropical regions and developing nations, such as the Indian subcontinent, Africa, Central and South America, and Mexico (Kumar R. et al., 2024). According to Singh A. et al. (2024), ALA is present in almost 80% of LA cases in India. With an incidence rate of 2.3 per 100,000 people in North America, PLA is the most frequent kind of LA in the Western world (Grassel M, Yim D, Shriver J, Redlin T; 2020).Males above the age of 60 have a higher frequency of PLA. Pyrogenic liver abscesses (PLA) are more common in industrialized nations (Kumanan T, Sujanitha V, Sreeharan N; 2020), in contrast to amoebic abscesses (ALA) which are widespread in tropical countries and, according to some writers, are a neglected ailment. According to Ndong A. et al. (2020), rupture accounts for as much as 26 percent of the outcomes. How it is administered determines the therapy, which is one of several alternatives.

It makes no difference what stage of evolution an organism is at; antibiotics are the initial line of defense and should always be used. On the other hand, small-diameter abscesses can be treated with anti-biotherapy alone (Trillos-Almanza MC, Gutierrez J; 2021). Percutaneous needle aspiration and catheter drainage are two treatments that have a history of success in the event that medical treatment alone is unsuccessful (Cai YL et al., 2015). According to Bhatia and Ali (2017), surgical treatment should only be reserved for burst liver abscesses, especially those located in the peritoneal cavity. According to Priyadarshi RN et al. (2019), one significant concern with open surgery was the higher associated death rate.Clinical and radiological evidence may not be able to differentiate between ALA and PLA. The aspirate seen in most cases of ALA aspiration resembles anchovy sauce.

In terms of microbiology, aspirates almost never include trophozoites. Furthermore, whereas serology for E. histolytica may not be useful for locals in high-endemicity areas, it could be crucial for tourists returning from such regions. The availability of molecular and antigen testing determines their usefulness. A growing number of noninvasive techniques are being utilized to identify DNA of E. histolytica in bodily fluids such blood, pus, saliva, etc. One such method is polymerase chain reactions (Haque R et al., 2010). It is possible to quickly and noninvasively detect ALA using more contemporary procedures, such as lateral flow tests that use serum markers (Noordin R et al., 2020). The purpose of this extensive research is to learn how surgery deals with liver abscesses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Liver abscess refers to localized accumulation of pus within the hepatic parenchyma which may have bacterial, amoebic origin or be from malignant tumors. Management of Liver Abscesses has however changed with time, and surgery has major role in management of the liver affections especially in complicated or recurrent cases.

Previous management of liver abscess was through open surgical drainage but since evolution of minimal access surgery, percutaneous drainage has been favored due its lesser complications and mortality (Haque et al., 2018). Nevertheless, surgery remains critical in patients' management even in the contemporary world since it is vital in complex cases. Large abscesses, multiloculated abscesses, or the abscesses that do not respond to percutaneous drainage should be approached surgically and in patients with complications such as hepatobiliary malignancy or uncontrolled sepsis (Chaudhary et al., 2020). Furthermore, surgery is done when the liver abscesses rupture or when they extend to surrounding structures causing fatal conditions such as peritonitis or pleural empyema (Chen et al., 2019). Bacterial abscesses are one of the most complex complications in surgical hepatology even at the present time (Корымасов E.A. et al., 2013) A number of intraperitoneal and extraperitoneal approaches for the surgery have been traditionally used in that goal and they are very stressful and often insufficient.This is perhaps especially the case when sepsis arises and there are

many abscesses Meyers W.C ; 2001).ous etiological factors, including bacterial, amoebic infections, and malignancies. The management of liver abscesses has evolved significantly over the years, with surgical intervention playing a pivotal role in treatment, particularly for complex or refractory cases.

Historically, open surgical drainage was the standard treatment for liver abscesses; however, with advancements in minimally invasive techniques, percutaneous drainage has become the preferred initial approach due to its lower morbidity and mortality rates (Haque et al., 2018). Despite these advancements, surgery continues to play a crucial role, particularly in complicated cases. Surgical intervention is often necessary for large abscesses, multiloculated abscesses, or those resistant to percutaneous drainage, as well as in patients with underlying conditions such as hepatobiliary malignancies or uncontrolled sepsis (Chaudhary et al., 2020). Additionally, surgery is sometimes required when liver abscesses rupture or spread to adjacent organs, leading to severe complications such as peritonitis or pleural empyema (Chen et al., 2019). One of the most challenging side effects in surgical hepatology is still bacterial abscesses (Корымасов Е.А. et al., 2013) Various intraperitoneal and extraperitoneal access techniques, which have historically been employed in their surgical treatment, are extremely stressful and frequently inadequate. This is particularly true in situations when sepsis develops and there are many abscesses (Meyers W.C ; 2001).

At the present time, percutaneous puncture and abscess drainage are the two most common treatment modalities of liver abscess. Puncture procedure alone yields some outcomes: 96% according to Cohen, J. l 2010.Some researchers support open drainage of abscesses particularly in numerous hepatic lesions while others advocate minimal invasive percutaneous techniques. Beregi A; 2000Because of low traumatism, relative simplicity, absence general anesthesia risk, shorter hospital stays and a ability to provide better results for a smaller money minimally invasive techniques for the treatment of abscess. In this topic, it is clear that the global incidence rates of liver abscesses differ; pyogenic liver abscesses are more frequent in developed countries while amoebic liver abscesses are more frequent in the tropics (Gupta et al., 2020). Infection is a disease that more often started through the portal vein, biliary system or from direct invasion of contiguous structures (Wang et al., 2021). Given the risks like rupture, sepsis or multiple organ dysfunction, the fistulas should be early detected.

Diagnostic imaging is preferably done using CT and ultrasound scans because the result highlights abscess-specific features (Cao et al., 2019). The diagnosis also benefits from indicators in serum which include inflammatory factors and liver tests. They should also consider differential diagnoses that may serve as indications of other diseases including hepatocellular carcinoma or metastatic illness (Ahmed et al., 2020).

That is why nonsurgical management mainly consists antimicrobial therapy and, sometimes, percutaneous drainage. Some of the research conducted have proved it that antibiotics are effective, particularly in simple abscesses (Dutta et al; 2018). Percutaneous drainage has been now accepted as a preferable method to surgery in case of abscesses up to 5cm: according to the literature, the successful drainage rates are ranged from 70% to 90% (Fang et al., 2019).

Indications for surgical intervention include size of abscess in excess of 10 cm, a multilocular abscess as well as complications of percutaneous drainage like a perforation or failure of the technique (Karami et al., 2021). Based on the size, location, and associated liver disease of the abscess, the strategies of the surgery may be an open procedure, laparoscopic approach or hepatic resection (Kim et al., 2020). For large collections it remains the preferred method of management because it allows for a better debridement of the abscess cavity and margins, and also aids in assessment for further underlying disease (Zhou et al., 2019).

Surgical Interventions in Liver Abscess

Surgery has always been the only way of handling liver abscesses before the introduction of antibiotics and minimal invasive surgery under imaging guidance. Today, surgery is used as a last resort when all other treatments are ineffective or are no longer allowed. In therapeutic strategies, there are open surgical techniques, laparoscopic and, in some cases, a liver resection.

Open Surgical Drainage

Here, open surgical drainage involves laying an incision directly over the abscess site with a view of draining the pus. Before imagaing-guided percutaneousaning drainage was available, this procedure was commonly implemented. Current practice shows that open surgical drainage is contemplated when percutaneous techniques are ineffective, for instance in large or multiple cavity abscesses that are difficult to access. Based on research works, open surgical drainage is advisable in such cases despite it being grater sensitive to other minimally invasive procedures (Chavez-Tapia et al., 2017).

Laparoscopic Drainage

Some advantages of laparoscopic drainage include; lesser rates of postoperative pain, shorter hospitalization period, and faster healing from the procedure compared to open surgeries. Techniques in imaging during laparoscopy have advanced and therefore abscess drainage is effectively done with minimal damage to the liver. In the chronic patient, likely to be stable not requiring an urgent open surgery, laparoscopic drainage should be recommended since it is as effective as an open procedure but with fewer complications. The meta-analysis of research by Zhou et al. (2020) showed that laparoscopic drainage is associated with minimised morbidity and mortality relative to open surgery. Nonetheless, success of this procedure depends on the location as well as the accessibility of the abscess.

Liver Resection

Liver resection may sometimes be necessary for example in a recurrent or refractory abscess. During the liver resection, the abscess and a part of the tissure damaged by the bacteria are excised. Due to the risks associate with this procedure this one is usually done in severe cases although it might be needed if an abscess is complex and fails to drain with simple procedures like aspiration (Kaplan et al., 2016). Cooper and colleagues' study shows that if drainage and medicines do not solve the infection then, liver resection can be of interest in many abscesses (Lu et al., 2017).

Role of Minimally Invasive Techniques

Thus, percutaneous needle aspiration and catheter drainage by ultrasound or CT guidance are usually used for the treatment of liver abscesses because of low complication rates and high efficacy. These procedures can be beneficial in pyogenic and amoebic liver abscesses, and drainage studies show over 90 percent success rate (Chen et al., 2015). However, percutaneous interventions are not possible in some cases due to practical limitations, or otherwise do not help to resolve the abscess, surgical intervention becomes warranted. In general, the positive outcomes are associated with the surgery of liver abscesses. There is a significant decrease in overall symptoms and increase in patient quality of life after surgery, and also low mortality rates most times below 5% (Singh et al., 2020). It must be borne in mind, however, that problem like bleeding, infection, and even liver dysfunction are likely to occur and patient selection as well as the perioperative management is critical (El-Ghazali et al., 2018).

Current Facts, Recent Developments, and Future Trends

Current innovations in laparoscopic and newly in robotic assisted surgeries bring the effective option in management of liver abscesses, as these do not cause much damage to the tissue but drain them effectively. Moreover, with advancement in imaging procedures, improved location of abscess cavities as well as the surrounding tissue is achieved; this improves the accuracy in surgery (Chau et al., 2021). Further developments should consider refining these minimally invasive approaches and on enhancing understanding of patient population likely to benefit from surgery.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this research article is to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of surgical intervention in treating liver abscess cases specifically within the patient population of Bolan Medical Complex, Quetta. This study aims to provide a detailed analysis of surgical procedures used in liver abscess management, assess the associated morbidity and mortality rates, and explore patient recovery outcomes in comparison to other treatment approaches, such as antibiotic therapy alone. By examining data from Bolan Medical Complex, the research will also highlight local demographic and clinical characteristics of liver abscess patients and identify potential challenges and complications unique to this setting. This investigation seeks to offer valuable insights

into the practical implications and success rates of surgery in managing liver abscesses, potentially guiding clinical decisions and optimizing treatment strategies for similar patient demographics.

MATERIAL AD METHODS

This qualitative study was conducted at Bolan Medical Complex, Quetta, a tertiary care hospital that serves as a referral center for liver abscess cases within the region. The study focused on understanding the role of surgical intervention in liver abscess management through detailed patient interviews. The sample comprised 100 patients diagnosed with liver abscess who had undergone surgical procedures as part of their treatment. The participants were selected based on purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of individuals with varied demographic and clinical backgrounds, thereby allowing for a comprehensive exploration of surgical outcomes, experiences, and postoperative recovery. Data collection was performed using semi-structured interviews, allowing for in-depth responses while maintaining a structured framework. The interview questions were designed to explore patient experiences with surgery, perceived benefits and challenges, and the impact of surgical intervention on symptom relief and overall health.

RESULTS

Table 1

Age and sex distribution of Participants

Age group (Years)	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
25-35	6	4	7
36-45	5	3	8
46-55	4	5	10
56-65	5	4	9
66-75	3	5	8
>76	2	1	3
Total	25 (56%)	20 (44%)	45 (100%)

Table 1 describes the age and sex distribution of the participants. 56% male and 44% female participated in the study, with different age brackets.

Table 2

Risk Factors Associated with Liver Abscess

Risk Factor	Frequency (%)
History of liver disease	40 (40)
Alcohol consumption	20 (20)
Diabetes mellitus	25 (25)
Poor hygiene practices	10 (10)
Previous infections	5 (5)
Total	100 (100)

Participants identified various risk factors contributing to the development of liver abscesses. A significant proportion of respondents reported a history of liver disease, while diabetes and alcohol consumption were also notable factors. This highlights the need for targeted preventive measures among high-risk groups.

Table 3

Symptoms Reported by Patients

Symptom	Frequency (%)
Abdominal pain	75 (75)
Fever	60 (60)
Nausea/Vomiting	45 (45)
Jaundice	30 (30)
Loss of appetite	55 (55)
Weight loss	25 (25)
Total	100 (100)

Table 3 summarizes the symptoms reported by participants, with abdominal pain being the most common symptom, followed closely by fever and loss of appetite. This information is crucial for healthcare providers in identifying and diagnosing liver abscesses early.

Table 4

Surgical Procedures Undertaken

Type of Surgery	Frequency (%)
Open drainage	40 (40)
Laparoscopic drainage	35 (35)
Percutaneous drainage	20 (20)
Liver resection	5 (5)
Total	100 (100)

This table illustrates the types of surgical procedures performed on participants with liver abscesses. Open drainage was the most commonly reported procedure, reflecting traditional practices, while laparoscopic methods are increasingly utilized, indicating a shift toward minimally invasive techniques.

Table 5

Surgical Experiences and Outcomes

Experience/Outcome	Frequency (%)
Successful outcome	80 (80)
Complications	15 (15)
Length of hospital stay (days)	
1-3 days	50 (50)
4-7 days	30 (30)
More than 7 days	20 (20)
Total	100 (100)

Participants shared their experiences regarding

surgical outcomes, with the majority reporting successful outcomes post-surgery. However, a notable percentage experienced complications. The length of hospital stay varied, with half of the patients discharged within three days, indicating generally favorable surgical recovery times.

Table 6

Post-operative Complications

Complication	Frequency (%)
Fever	20 (20)
Infection	10 (10)
Hemorrhage	5 (5)
No Complications	65 (65)

Table 6 outlines the post-operative complications experienced by patients. A majority reported no complications, indicating a favorable surgical outcome.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study has implications that help in understanding the features, treatment, and prognosis of LA patients that received surgical intervention at Bolan Medical Complex, Quetta. The study results are as follows based on the demographics, risk factors/ symptoms by the patients and the type of operations performed on the patients to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of these surgeries: Of the participants, the majority were the male patient (56%) and a lesser number of female patients and in the 46–55 age range. This is in agreement with a prior finding that liver abscesses are more prevalent in the elderly and males (Grassel et al., 2022). Specific preventive strategies, especially for high-risk populations, are envisaged because of the following risk factors for liver abscess that were established, history of liver disease 40%, diabetes mellitus 25%, alcohol consumption 20%.

Based on the above findings, it may be essential to reduce the prevalence of liver absesses, particularly in people with the above risk factors by treating underlying medical conditions and promoting public health interventions. The most commonly observed symptoms were fever in 60% and loss of appetite in 55% of the patients, and abdominal pain in 75%. Common patient complaints include the presence of abdominal pain; these numerous patients' symptoms correlate with the manifestations of liver abscesses as detailed in the literature being published currently (Kumar et al., 2018). Percutaneous drainage was the least frequent procedure and performed in 20% of study participants while laparoscopic drainage was the most frequent surgical approach and performed in 35% of patients.

This is in congruency with the fact that global populace has increasingly sought for minimally invasive surgery, which is documented to have several and evident benefits like multiple recovery periods and low postoperative pain (Cai et al., 2018). The Bolan Medical difficult treats difficult cases, and large or multiloculated abscesses frequently required open drainage, which can predispose to this method he high success rate of surgical intervention (80%) were particularly noticeable and underlined the effectiveness of this method of treatment of liver abscesses. This is comparable to other previous studies that have corroborated the constructors who observe the better results in the patients who undergo the surgical intervention. The reported complications (15%) are relatively low; it implies that though risks come with the performance of operations on patients, benefits always surpass drawbacks where surgery is performed by the right surgical tactics on right candidates of surgery. In as much as it's true that complications are unavoidable incidences in almost all surgeries, this statistics show that less than one fifth of the patients had complications that amounts to emphasizing that some benefits sometimes outweigh the downsides of surgery for right candidates.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, surgical intervention is therefore an important aspect in the management of liver abscesses, most particularly when the abscess is complicated or when non-surgical treatment modalities have proven ineffective. According to the study done on Bolan Medical Complex, the two types of surgical approaches that enhance patient's quality of life as well as reduce the symptoms include open and laparoscopic drainage. The overall success rates and reflective patient satisfaction underscore a rationale for early surgical intervention in liver abscess, despite some related risks. Surgical therapy's effectiveness will increase from further progress in laparoscopic surgery and from the improved designation criteria for patients undergoing surgery in the future; This

manuscript improves patient care for liver abscesses to healthcare. Finally, apart from helping to understand the specific obstacles faced in the Quetta region, this research also outlines the general implications of the surgical approach in cases of liver abscesses on an international scale.

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