

Incidence and pattern of oesophageal perforations in Kenyatta National Hospital.

Abstract:

A retrospective study of 42 patients with perforations of the oesophagus during the period 1981-1987 indicated that 57.1% of the perforations were iatrogenic. Diseases of the oesophagus and in contiguous structures and foreign bodies in the oesophagus caused perforations in 31% of the cases. Perforations in 35.7% of the patients were located in the middle third of the oesophagus. The lower and upper thirds were affected in 31% of the patients in each site. The presenting physical signs included tachycardia (78.6%), fever (76.2%) and dyspnoea (59.5%). The main accompanying symptoms were chest pain and coughs in 100% and in 50% of the patients respectively. Radiographic findings showed hydropneumothorax in 40.5% of the cases and consolidation in 38.1% of the patients. Oesophagoscopy was positive in 78% of cases tested while thoracocentesis was positive in all cases that were tested.