

OCCURRENCE OF PALATAL FISTULA AFTER PRIMARY PALATOPLASTY IN A RANDOMIZED CLINICAL TRIAL

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Objective: Contribute with information about occurrence of fistula after primary palatoplasty in patient with unilateral cleft lip and palate (UCLP). The objectives included: to describe occurrence of fistula in a group of 466 patients with UCLP; to compare fistula outcome between surgical techniques at palatoplastias and between surgeons; to verify the relationship between fistula cleft width and use of relaxing incision at palatoplasty. **Methods:** Data for this study were retrieved from patients charts and grouped according to technique at primary palatoplasty. Outcome was analyzed using Chi-Square Statistics. **Results:** The findings indicated that 16% of the patients studied presented palatal fistula posterior to the incisive forame. The occurrence of fistula for the group that received the Furlow procedure (20,6%) was significantly higher ($p=0.032$) than the group that received the Langenbeck procedure (11,7%). The incidence was related to the surgeon ($p=0.004$) and cleft width ($p=0.031$). The differences related relaxing incisions were not significant. **Conclusion:** Fistula occurrence was greater for the patients who received primary palatoplasty with the Furlow technique. An association was found between fistula outcome and cleft width and surgeons' ability.