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Introduction to electrosurgery in dermatologic and aesthetic medicine

Electrosurgery refers to four different methods: Electrocoagulation, electrodesiccation, electrofulguration and electrosection using high frequency to perform various procedures in dermatology and aesthetic surgery. Aim of this study is to ascertain the mode of operation in performing several procedures safely and successfully involving high frequency alternating current, which converts to heat by resistance as it passes through the tissue. The result of heat buildup within the tissue which results in thermal tissue damage, thus enabling several procedures, these modalities are commonly used for hemostasis, debulking procedures such as rhinophyma excision and treatment of benign and malignant skin conditions ranging from acrochordons (skin tags) to Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC). Electrosurgery is a surgical technique which involves sequential curettage (scraping) of a skin lesion followed by electrodesiccation (a form of electronic cautery). The sequence is generally repeated 3 or 4 times. It is an alternative to more invasive surgery. It is used to treat benign and superficial malignant skin lesions including but not limited to seborrheic keratosis, may include observation, excision and curettage of actinic keratosis, nodular and superficial basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma *in situ*. Risks include discomfort, pain, bleeding, burns, electric shock, recurrence, conversion to excision, infection, changes in pigmentation and scarring. Adequate training and understanding of the electrosurgical unit is very essential to the physician using this equipment to perform safe and successful surgery.

Biography

Chandran Rajagopal has completed his Graduation from the Madras Medical College, University of Madras in 1972. After his Graduation from MMC, he served in the Malaysian Health Service in the fields of Psychiatry and General Surgery. He continued his training in Dermatological Surgery in US with the American Academy of Aesthetic and Restorative Surgery in New Orleans, Louisiana under Professor George Farber and became a Fellow of the Academy and later as an International Fellow of the American Academy of Dermatologists.

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