

Experience of combined abortion and laparoscopic sterilisation with Filshie Clips

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Introduction: Combined abortion and sterilisation remains contentious mainly because of concerns about safety. There is no published data about the use of Filshie Clips specifically for this purpose.

Objective: To ascertain the safety of combined abortion and sterilisation with Filshie Clips from the surgical and anaesthetic perspectives and describe our experience of this procedure between 1987 and 2002.

Study design: Retrospective case note review of all patients who underwent the combined procedures under a single surgical-anaesthetic team between August 1997 and 2002. Data abstracted from the case notes included demographic details, duration of the procedures, difficulties encountered, complications and incidence of regret.

Results: The team performed a total of 184 procedures. Majority of the patients had decided on sterilisation before experiencing the unwanted pregnancy. Some became pregnant while awaiting interval sterilisation procedures. The range of the pregnancies was 6-14 weeks. One Filshie Clip was deemed sufficient to occlude each fallopian tube in 98% of cases. The mean surgical time of each combined procedure was 22 minutes. Ten percent were ASA 3. Eighteen percent were obese. In 36% of cases, the anaesthetic time was more than 30 minutes. Forty-four percent had Post-operative nausea and vomiting, 77% needed post-operative analgesia of which 43% needed morphine. There were no major complications. To date, we have had no reported failures.

Conclusion: We conclude that the combined procedure using Filshie Clips is safe and should not be unnecessarily denied to women who wish to have it.