

ROBOTIC THYROIDECTOMY; EARLY EXPERIENCE OF TWO DIFFERENT APPROACH METHOD

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Background/Purpose: Thyroid surgery has recently emerged as one of the most promising fields for the application of robotic surgery. We report a single surgeon's initial experience of robotic thyroid operations using two different approach methods.

Methods: The first 10 consecutive cases of robotic thyroidectomy were reviewed retrospectively. Two different approach methods, the bilateral axillo-breast approach(BABA) and the gasless transaxillary approach(TA) using the da Vinci S System, were performed by a single surgeon in Jeju National University Hospital.

Results: All patients underwent thyroid lobectomy with or without central compartment node dissection. Initial three patients underwent thyroidectomy using BABA and other seven patients using TA. All procedures were successfully completed robotically. The median age was 38.5 ± 9.1 years (range, 26~52 years). The patient's BMI was 24.2 ± 4.2 . Pathological diagnoses included papillary carcinoma(n=9) and follicular adenoma(n=1). Median tumor size was 0.7 ± 0.6 cm(range, 0.4~2.5). The overall mean operation time was 170 ± 58 minutes(BABA 265 ± 37 min, TA 155 ± 27 min, $p < 0.05$). The median postoperative length of stay was 5.0 ± 1.6 days(BABA 6.7 ± 0.6 , TA 3.8 ± 1.0 , $p < 0.05$). There are no major complications in all patients. All patients were satisfied with the good cosmetic outcomes. Improvements in the length of time to perform components of the procedure were noted from the early group of cases to later group of cases.

Discussion & Conclusion: Robotic thyroid surgery is a safe and feasible alternative to the traditional open surgical approach in select patients. Our initial experience showed that the TA is advantage in short operation time and BABA provide good visualization of operative field as conventional open thyroidectomy.