

"The use of the platysma myocutaneous flap for reconstruction of the skin defects in the head-neck area: a retrospective study "

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The platysma myocutaneous flap is a recognized reconstructive option for tissue defects in the head and neck region.. Although it has mainly been proposed for intraoral defects, its use has expanded to the reconstruction of laryngo-pharyngeal, lip, and cheek defects. However, its popularity remains limited.

The platysma myocutaneous flap can be harvested as a superiorly based or a posteriorly based flap. The superiorly based flap has a robust arterial blood supply from the facial and submental arteries but a less efficient venous drainage. The posteriorly based flap has a good venous drainage from the external jugular vein, but the arterial blood supply is almost random from the occipital artery.

We present a retrospective analysis of our experience with this flap for defects in the parotid and auricular regions. 11 patients received a superiorly based platysma myocutaneous flap for reconstruction of skin defects following resection of carcinoma of the head and neck. The sites of malignancy were the parotid (7 cases: 4 primary and 3 lymph node metastases with skin invasion), the skin of the cheek (2 cases), and the pinna (2 cases).

There were no complications in eight patients. Flap-related complications occurred in three cases. These included secondary epidermolysis as a result from venous congestion leading to limited skin loss. All complications resolved with conservative care only.

We believe that the platysma myocutaneous flap is a viable alternative to more complex reconstructive options for skin defects of the auricular and parotid regions.