



DERMATOLOGICAL SURGERY

THE “BAT FLAP”: A FLAP FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF LARGE SKULL SKIN DEFECTS

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Introduction. The excision of a non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) with appropriate margins of healthy skin is necessary. The reconstruction of scalp after surgery of wide and full-thickness tumours can be challenging.

Objective. We describe a new reconstructive technique for full-thickness and wide scalp surgical defects, called bat flap.

Materials and Methods. From January 2013 to January 2017, seven patients underwent excision of squamous cell carcinomas of the scalp (average size 15 x 12 cm²) in general anesthesia. The depth of the excision depended on the involvement of the anatomical structures by the tumour. In four patients the resection included pericrania, in two patients bone, in one patient dura madre. In all cases soft tissue defects were reconstructed using the “bat flap”. Bat flap is a local advancement flap created by sliding forward the occipital part of the scalp, or backward the anterior parietal part of the scalp, according to the position of the defect. This flap is supplied by the anterior and/or posterior superficial temporal arteries/artery. This movement creates two ears of redundant tissue bilaterally in the temporoparietal area, from which the name of the flap is from. The defect in the donor area was repaired by placing skin grafts or artificial dermis graft. The “bat ears” were surgically removed in four cases, in the others the redundant tissue has flattened without surgery.

Results. The procedural time was average two hours, patients hadn't significant post-operative complications and were overall satisfied.

Conclusions. Bat Flap could be a valid alternative solution for reconstruction after a wide and full-thickness surgery of the scalp. The technique is oncologically safe, with no relevant post-operative complications and good aesthetic results.

