

Case Report

GROSSLY DIFFERENTIATING FEATURES IN SUICIDAL AND HOMICIDAL CUT-THROAT INJURIES - REPORT OF TWO CASES

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ABSTRACT

These incidences occurred within the time duration of two months. One case was of suicidal attempt by a blade. The other homicidal case involved incised wound on neck by a sharp knife. There were few differentiating points in the targeted area which made this study interesting. These two cases amply illustrate that study of incised wound pattern over neck could demonstrate the nature of wound i.e. homicidal versus suicidal. On the academic side these photographs could be used as a supplement for spot diagnosis in MBBS and MD examination in Forensic Medicine.

Keywords: *Cut-Throat Injury, Suicidal Injury, Homicidal Injury, Bizarre Cut Throat, Incised Wound*

INTRODUCTION

The forensic literature is replete with multiple variations of cut throat injury involving homicide and suicidal attempt using offending weapons like knife (Joshi *et al.*, 2013; Shrabana *et al.*, 2012), sickle (Shetty *et al.*, 2009) razor (Rautji *et al.*, 2004; Shrabana *et al.*, 2012), table saw (Hejna, 2013) and sword (Shrabana *et al.*, 2012). A bizarre case had been reported in which a mentally challenged individual cut his neck with scissor (Cox). The authors came across two cases who reported to the emergency section of JNMC, AMU, Aligarh, recently in which one injury was reported to be suicidal (Case No 1) whereas the other was homicidal (Case No. 2).



Photograph 1



Photograph 2

CASES

Case No. 1

The victim 28 years old male was brought to the casualty about fortnight back with fresh, bleeding incised wound over the neck. On examination it was found that the incision extended from left lateral of the neck to the right lateral side. The wound indicated a determined sweeping motion of the blade which was recovered from the site. Hesitation cut can be appreciated in small measure over left side of the neck. The bleeding was minimal. The jugular vein, carotid arteries and trachea were spared. No foreign body was found over or in the wound. The patient made an uneventful recovery later.

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Case No. 2

The victim 38 years old male was brought by the police to the emergency section of JNMC Hospital, Aligarh. He was found in a desolate spot about 1-1 ½ km away from the town of Khair, District Aligarh. On recovery the person narrated that he was allegedly attacked by 2-3 people who cornered him in a secluded area and attacked him by a sharp knife. He was immobilized by two people and the third person attacked him with sharp edged knife with common intent to kill him.

DISCUSSION

Photographs 1 and 2 are placed side by side for easy comparability and examination.

The incised wound over the neck in photograph 1 shows the following features compatible with suicidal attempt.

- a. Hesitation cut present
- b. Long incised wound from left to right of the neck illustrating the determination of suicide
- c. Shallow wound pointing towards careful self inflicted wound
- d. No foreign body found within the substance of wound
- e. No major artery was cut

Photograph 2 belongs to the homicidal injury inflicted by a sharp edged weapon. Characteristic features of the wound are:

- a. Deep incised wound showing that moderate force was applied.
- b. Tailing is towards the left side of the wound indicating that initial thrust was on the right side.
- c. Bleeding was moderate in nature.
- d. Foreign body in the form of mud and glass blades were recovered leading to assumption that a struggle took place.

Conclusion

The photographs collectively hold significance because they provide valuable differentiating features in suicidal and homicidal cut throat injuries. The pattern of injury in each case profoundly gives clue as to the nature of the crime. These case reports holds additional significance in the sense that they can be utilized as additional tools of visual examination in MBBS and MD Forensic Medicine student assessment.

The authors feel that the case reports merited wider dissemination through the print media.

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