

11.03 Retrospective 10-year review of medical thorascopies in Galway University Hospital 2013 - 2023

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Background: Medical thoracoscopy is a procedure performed by respiratory physicians, to obtain parietal pleural biopsies in order to diagnose or confirm malignancy involving the pleura, or as a combined procedure with therapeutic intent. The primary indication for medical thoracoscopy is suspected malignant pleural effusion (MPE).

Methods: We conducted a retrospective, single-centre review of recorded medical thorascopies performed from 2013-2023 in Galway University Hospital. A total of 110 patients were included. Data collection included patient demographics, indication, interventions undertaken, diagnostic yield and complication rate.

Results: 75 males and 35 females underwent medical thoracoscopy; 66.4% (N=73) diagnostic only, 31.8% combined diagnostic and therapeutic (N=35) and 1.8% (N=2) therapeutic IPC insertion (Figure 1). Of these, 107 (97.2%) underwent pleural biopsy, with one unsuccessful procedure.

The diagnostic yield of parietal pleura biopsies was 98.1% (N=105) - 62 (59%) were malignant and 43 (41%) were non-malignant, with 3 positive for tuberculosis infection.

2 patients (1.8%) had major complications. Minor complications reported were pneumothorax (1.8%), pneumonia (5.4%), atrial fibrillation (2.7%) and subcutaneous emphysema (2.7%).

Conclusion: Overall medical thoracoscopy within our centre in appropriately selected patients has an excellent diagnostic yield in suspected MPE, for diagnosis, further tissue sampling, or confirmation of metastatic disease. It a safe procedure with few complications.

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Figure 1: Procedures undertaken during all medical thorascopies 2013-2023

