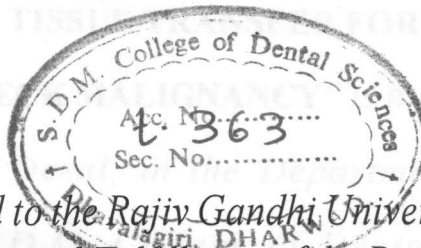


MICROVASCULAR FREE TISSUE TRANSFER FOR EXCISIONAL DEFECTS OF HEAD AND NECK MALIGNANCY



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Excisional defects of head and neck malignancy are often complex and large, requiring multidimensional reconstruction. Reconstruction options following surgical resection of head and neck cancer are many and varied⁴⁶. They include local flaps, regional pedicle flaps, distant pedicle flaps and free flaps. Although local flaps are ideal, their use is limited by their smaller size and cosmetic disfigurement whereas the pedicle flaps are reliable and frequently used, but have their own disadvantage which include limited arc of rotation, compromised blood supply at distal end of flap and tethering effect of pedicle at the periphery^{46, 49}.

The recent advances in reconstructive surgery, the advent and success of microvascular free tissue transfer has revolutionized the reconstruction of head and neck defects. Magnification by microscope in anastomosing vessels of small caliber is an established method⁴⁶. The ability to transfer tissue from one part of the body to another and reliably restore circulation to the transferred tissue by microanatomosis of donor and recipients has radically improved the success of restoring function and form.