

Abstract

Evaluation of the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the cause and rate of referral to the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of Fatemi Hospital in Ardabil in 2019-2021

Introduction: The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on all aspects of our lives. Health care and treatment have also been affected by COVID-19 after the outbreak of the epidemic, and oral and maxillofacial surgery is no exception. This study was conducted with the aim of determining the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on the outcome and rate of visits to the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of Fatemi Hospital in Ardabil city in 2018 to 2021.

Materials and Methods: This study was conducted analytically and retrospectively. All referents from the years 2018-2021 were included using census sampling. The years 2018 and 2019 were considered pre-Covid-19, while 2020 and 2021 were considered post-Covid-19. The analyzed indicators included site of injury, reason for referral, type of referral, surgical procedure, and damaged tissue, separated by demographic variables. Data analysis was performed using Chi-square and Fisher tests. Data were entered into SPSS version 26 software for analysis.

Results: Out of the 744 patients referred to the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Fatemi Hospital between 2018 and 2021, the majority of patients (217 or 29.2%) were seen in 2019. Of the 744 clients, 477 (64.1%) were men and 296 (39.8%) were between 30 and 65 years old. The most common reason for referral was abscesses (28.4%). A significant difference was observed in the frequency of patients before and after the COVID-19 pandemic ($P < 0.001$). Before the pandemic, the majority of procedures were incision drainage and antibiotic therapy (33.8%), while after the pandemic, open reduction and internal fixation (24.6%) were more common. There was a significant difference in the type of procedure and the affected area before and after the COVID-19 pandemic ($P < 0.001$). Additionally, there was a significant difference in the type of damaged tissue between men and women before ($P = 0.017$) and after ($P < 0.05$) the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion: The number of visits to Fatemi Hospital's oral and maxillofacial department in Ardabil city decreased by 5% in the years following the Covid-19 pandemic. Soft tissue damage decreased, but hard tissue damage increased. The mandible injury site increased, but it decreased in the jaw and face areas. Incisional drainage and antibiotic therapy decreased after the Covid-19 pandemic, but close reduction increased.

keywords: pandemic; Covid-19; oral and maxillofacial surgery