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Title: Pattern of thoracic injuries among victims of mass causality suicide bomb blast incidents in Karachi

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Body: INTRODUCTION Bomb blast injuries are a significant cause of trauma and are increasing in civilian population in Pakistan. These explosives release large amount of energy and metallic shrapnel which cause devastating injuries. This study aims to study pattern of thoracic injuries among victims of mass suicide bombing incidents in Karachi. METHODS This was a retrospective study conducted at Liaquat National Hospital, Karachi. All patients who presented during 5 major suicidal bombing incidents that took place in Karachi between 2005-2012 were included in the study. Patients record files, charts and intraoperative findings were recorded and analyzed. RESULTS There were total n=228 victims of blast injuries who presented in our setup. Of them n=23 patients had thoracic injuries. Metallic sharpnell injuries were the most common mechanism of injury in n=16 patients. Blast lung injury was suspected in n=3 patients. Emergency tube thoracostomy was done in n=13 patients. Thoracotomy was done in n=6 patients in whom massive hemothorax was found in n=5 patients and n=1 patient had lung lacerations. Pneumothorax was found in n=2, hemo-pneumothorax in n=4 and effusion in n=2 patients. Rib fractures due to shrapnel was found in n=3 patients. Hospital acquired infections were developed in n=7 patients. Mortality was 13.04%. CONCLUSIONS Mass suicidal bombings are a major threat in the world. Especially in Pakistan which is under constant threat of terrorism. These suicidal bombings are becoming a major cause of trauma in civilian population. The pattern of injuries is unique and there are more sharpnell injuries as compared to primary blast inuries in terms of infections, morbidity and mortality.