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Laser assisted uvulopalasty: the use of the reinforced laryngeal mask airway

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Introduction

The use of laser assisted uvulopalatoplasty (LAUP) is now established as a recognised technique for the treatment of snoring. The traditional anaesthetic management of this surgical procedure requires the placement of a laser-resistant endotracheal tube to facilitate ventilation.

In this preliminary study, we assessed the laser-resistant properties of the reinforced Laryngeal Mask Airway (rLMA) followed by retrospective series of 924 patients who underwent LAUP with the use of the rLMA.

Materials and methods

We compared the incendiary characteristics of the reusable and disposable rLMA to power densities at 4.0×10^3 watts/cm^2 (the commonly used laser settings for LAUPs). Once the rLMA was deemed safe for use with laser surgery, a retrospective survey was conducted over a period of 5 years with the use of the rLMA.

Results

The laser penetrated with the reusable rLMA at 20 min, but could not be ignited. However the laser did penetrate the disposable rLMA after 0.3 seconds and ignited at 2 seconds. A retrospective analysis of 924 patients undergoing LAUP over a period of 10 years with the use of the reusable rLMA revealed no reports of damage or adverse incident with the use of the rLMA.

Conclusion

The use of the reusable rLMA for LAUP is safe and effective.