

ABSTRACT

Objective: To describe the indications for total abdominal hysterectomy for women with benign disease and to determine the immediate (initial ten days) and medium term outcome.

Design: A prospective cohort study.

Setting: Gynaecology ward (ward – 06) in the North Colombo Teaching Hospital at Ragama.

Subjects: Hundred and three women underwent total abdominal hysterectomy for benign disease from September 2002 to June 2003.

Method: Self completed patient questionnaires before and ten days and three months after hysterectomy. Data extracted from patients' hospital case notes.

Results: The principal indications were bleeding, pain or both giving the commonest diagnosis of dysfunctional uterine bleeding (53.4%). Symptoms were severe enough to have a considerable impact on lifestyle. Otherwise, the women were in good health. During the first ten post-operative days, the women experienced a reduction in their ability to perform activities of daily living. Urinary (15.5%) and wound (8.7%) infections were the commonest complications. By three months, the principal symptoms had resolved for 97% of the women while there was significant improvement in urinary function, psychological health, activities of daily living, lifestyle activities and sexual enjoyment. Despite this, these changes did not meet the pre-operative expectations of some women.

Conclusion: Most women reported substantial benefits from hysterectomy. However, women should be counselled about early, transient adverse effects. These findings can be served as a benchmark for a multicentre study.