PostThoracotomy Care

Nermine Phillips, MD

Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University

The spectrum of thoracic surgery encompasses a wide variety of pathologic conditions affecting many different organs. An understanding of the basic concepts of diagnosis and management of disorders of the trachea, lung, pleura, chest wall, oesophagus and mediastinum is essential to those involved in the care of patients with these problems.

When talking about post-thoractomy care we should take in consideration the following issues:

- Neurological management including pain control and neuropathies.
- Respiratory management, respiratory care in the intial postoperative period and management of the thoractomy tubes.
- Cardiovascular management and complications (e.g. arrhythmias, myocardial infarction and congestive heart failure).
- Fluid management; judicious fluid management and factors precipitating pulmonary oedema.
- Care following oesophageal surgery.
- Care following thymectomy in myasthenia gravis.