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Cervical paragangliomas

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Paragangliomas are neuro-endocrine tumors of the extra-adrenal paraganglionic tissues derived from neural crest and have been recognized as a part of the Amine Precursor Uptake and Decarboxylation of Pearse (APUD) system. They are found in the head and neck region commonly as carotid body tumors, glomus jugulare, glomus tympanicum, glomus vagale and sympathetic paragangliomas. Surgical excision is the preferred treatment of head and neck paraganglioma. Safe surgical excision requires good preoperative planning based on angiographic study and preoperative hemodynamic carotid and cerebrovascular flow studies, wide surgical exposure, meticulous hemostasis assisted in selected cases by preoperative embolization, proximal and distal vascular control, careful dissection of all major neurovascular structures and co-operation of a vascular surgeon skilled in carotid reconstructive techniques.

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