RESEARCH PAPER

AIRWAY MANAGEMENT IN DIFFICULT AIRWAY: RECENT ADVANCES AND TECHNIQUES

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ABSTRACT

Difficult airways are a significant problem in anaesthesia, emergency medicine and intensive care with significant implications on the morbidity and mortality of the patients. The changes in the airway equipment's, visualization and algorithmic organizations have created a great difference in the clinical outcomes. The current research paper examines the current developments of difficult airway care such as video laryngoscopy, supraglottic airway devices, and evidence-based airway guidelines. The efficacy, safety and clinical applicability was determined using an intensive literature review and analytical synthesis of recent clinical studies, guidelines as well as trials. Results have shown that video laryngoscopy has a higher first-pass success rate and visualization, supraglottic devices are the most effective in providing rescue ventilation and intubation routes, and decision-making and patient safety were greatly improved using structured algorithms like AIDAA guidelines. Technology, training and standardization of the processes have transformed the difficult airway management to a more predictable and systematized process.

Keywords: Difficult airway, video laryngoscopy, supraglottic airway devices, airway algorithms, intubation, anaesthesia, airway management.

How to cite this article: Gandhi P, Sarkar A. Airway Management in Difficult Airway: Recent Advances and Techniques. Int J Drug Deliv Technol. 2026;16(57s): 91-101. DOI: 10.25258/ijddt.16.57s.12

Source of support: Nil.

Conflict of interest: None.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance

The management of the airway is a fundamental aspect of clinical practice in anaesthesia, emergency medicine and critical care. A challenging airway can be described as a clinical situation where a trained practitioner has a problem with mask ventilation, tracheal intubation or both.

Difficult airway management is related to the risk of hypoxia, aspiration, brain injury, and mortality. Over recent decade, attention has shifted away to anatomical difficulty to the concept of a difficult airway being physiologically, and includes issues such as hypoxemia, hemodynamic instability and metabolic derangements.

1.2 Evolution of Airway Management

Traditionally the direct laryngoscopy and blind methods prevailed over airway management. However, recent technological developments and increased knowledge about the physiology of the airways has led to the development of new and more complex equipment such as video laryngoscopes and second generation supraglottic airway equipment.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Recent advances in the area of handling problematic airways with special attention to video laryngoscopy, supraglottic devices, and airway algorithms and their impact on clinical outcomes will be analysed in the current paper.

2. Literature Review

Myatra (2023) notes that recent developments in airway management have greatly enhanced safety and efficiency of managing difficult airways in a number of clinical practices. The author emphasizes that the change in the conventional techniques to the technological techniques such as video laryngoscopy techniques and second generation supraglottic airway devices has transformed clinical practice(Myatra*et al.*, 2023). The paper notes that video laryngoscopes have better glottic visualization, resulting in better first-pass success rates with fewer complications. One more problem which the author focuses on is that it is necessary to have structured algorithms of airway management, particularly those developed by the All India Difficult Airway Association that puts oxygenation first and limit the number of attempts to intubate the patient again. The other piece of information raised is the concept of the physiologically challenging airway which goes beyond the anatomical challenge and includes hypoxia and hemodynamic instability. Another essential role of training and simulation in improving clinician preparedness and competence is mentioned by the author. The incorporation of innovative devices using standardized protocols is also introduced as one of the determinants of enhancing patient outcomes. However, the author also identifies the following limitations such as cost, availability, and suitable training. In general, the research concludes that constant innovation and following guidelines are needed to achieve optimal airway management.

Butler (2003) also says that management of the difficult airway should be based on a thorough knowledge of other airway methods and adjuncts in

order to guarantee patient safety. The author describes different classic and modern devices of airways, such as fiberoptic bronchoscopes, laryngeal mask airways, and intubating stylets. The fact that a range of backup strategies is extremely emphasized is particularly important during emergency situations when the initial intubation may not be efficient. The author points out that there is no standard technique and clinicians ought to be proficient in numerous techniques so that they can handle different clinical scenarios(Butler *et al*., 2003). Another area that the study concentrates on is the importance of preparation and anticipation in the management of challenging airways such as effective patient evaluation and equipments preparedness. The writer adds that the obstruction of airways can lead to severe complications, such as hypoxia and cardiac arrest, and thus an early intervention is crucial. Also, the value of collaboration and communication in airway management is addressed as one of the critical aspects of enhancing outcomes. The author concludes that the efficient management depends on a complex of technical skills, the clinical judgment, and availability of the appropriate equipment.

Frova (2009) indicates that airway management algorithms are important to lay through the complex process of dealing with difficult airways by guiding clinicians. The author also examines different algorithms that are designed by international bodies and their significance in clinical practice standardization. The studies provide evidence that structured algorithms reduce variability in the decision-making process and increase patient safety by giving stepwise instructions(Frova*et al*., 2009). The restriction of attempts to intubate, oxygenate and replace other methods in the situation when it is needed is among the main principles that the author discusses. Another important development that is mentioned is the introduction of supraglottic airway devices and surgical airway options to these algorithms. The author reports that algorithms are not strict guidelines but rather malleable structures that may be tailored to the needs of each patient. It has been known that they need training and acculturation to these algorithms to be effective. The paper finds that the properly designed algorithms contribute to clinical efficiency and reducing complications in the challenging airway management.

Liaqat (2025) argues that the intensive care unit poses special challenges because of the critical state of the patients and the occurrence of physiological instability. The writer stresses that ICU patients usually have impaired oxygen stores and it is necessary to provide swift and efficient airway care. The study highlights the importance of the use of structured algorithms peculiar to the ICU setting, i.e. preoxygenation, hemodynamic stability, and early use of alternative airway devices(Liaqat *et al*., 2025). Video laryngoscopy is acknowledged as a useful method in this environment due to its ability to improve the visualization and increase the success rates. The author also talks about the use of supraglottic airway tools as rescue devices in case of intubation failure. Another important aspect is that the multidisciplinary teamwork would be necessary since airway management in the ICU may involve anaesthesiologists, intensive and emergency physicians. The paper has indicated the importance of planning including equipment supply and staff preparedness. The author also arrives at the conclusion that complying with evidence-based strategies and ongoing training are critical in enhancing the outcomes in critically ill patients.

According to Jung (2023), a combination of the difficult airway management method is essential to patient safety and minimization of complications. The author gives a comprehensive overview of different strategies, such as advanced airway devices, structured algorithms and training methodologies. The paper identifies the significance of early detection of challenging airway predictors and active strategizing(Jung *et al*., 2023). They single out video laryngoscopy and second-generation supraglottic airway devices as some of the innovations that have improved the outcome of clinical practice. Another aspect that the author highlights is the importance of training that is based on simulation in improving clinician skills and confidence. The other major area that has been considered is integration of human factors in airway management practices such as communication and teamwork. The paper notes that the airway management errors are typically brought about by lack of proper coordination and neglect of procedures. The author arrives at the conclusion that in order to achieve the optimal patient outcomes, it must have a combination of technological innovations, institutionalized guidelines and proper training.

Shirgoska, (2012) believes that new techniques and devices have been invented that have helped improve the aspect of difficult airway management. The author talks about different innovations such as video laryngoscopes, optical stylets, and improved supraglottic airway devices. Visualization, ease of use and overall success in airway management have enhanced with these technologies. The research points out that contemporary equipment is created to meet the particular difficulties related to problematic airways, i.e. restricted mouth opening and limited neck motion. The author also stresses the need to engage in continuous research and development over the same field in order to deal with the challenges that arise. The need to train and be familiar with new devices is pointed out to be essential to having a successful implementation. The conclusion of the paper is that technological

innovation is a key driver of patient safety and clinical outcomes.

Edelman (2019) says that difficult airway management algorithms are vital instruments that can be used to guide clinical practice and enhance patient safety. The author broadly examines the various algorithmic approaches and their effectiveness in a variety of clinical scenarios. The paper highlights the importance of algorithms in assisting clinicians to make informed decisions on a timely basis to minimize the chances of complications. Implementation of advanced airway devices in these algorithms is highlighted as one of the key aspects to improve the outcomes(Edelman *et al*., 2019). The author also talks on the need to revise guidelines regularly with the emerging evidence. The key to successful implementation is determined to be training and compliance with algorithms. The study concludes that the administration can be improved in terms of consistency and reduced variability in clinical practice using algorithm-based administration.

Adnet (2001) argues that airway management is a vital part of emergency medicine and has to be approached systematically to guarantee patient safety. The author talks about different methods and issues related to airway management, such as the significance of quick evaluation and response. The research mentions that the inability to stabilise the airway may cause extreme complications, and therefore it is crucial to take immediate measures. The significance of alternative airway devices and techniques is brought out as an alternative. Another point that the author makes is that training and experience can enhance clinical outcomes. The study concludes that airway management requires a combination of technical skills, clinical judgment and proper preparation.

According to Miller (2023), there are specific considerations to management of challenging airways in children patients due to the anatomical and physiological differences. The author emphasizes that the airways are smaller, children inhale more oxygen, and fewer physiological reserves, which makes the airways management more complicated. The study also focuses on the importance of the application of the correct size of equipment and the procedures on pediatric patients(Miller *et al*., 2023). This population is mentioned as benefiting with the use of supraglottic airway devices and video laryngoscopy. The other aspect, which the author presents, is the importance of training and simulation to improve the competence of clinicians. The researcher draws a conclusion that special strategies are needed to sustain an effective and safe airway management among children.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Design

The current research follows the qualitative and analytical research design with a systematic review and integrative synthesis of the literature available in the area of difficult airway management. The methodological framework is designed in such a way that it will cover the modern developments in a thorough manner whilst being scientifically rigorous and reproducible(Miller *et al*., 2023). It used a systematic approach to reduce bias, increase transparency, and enable a structured assessment of evidence in various areas, such as device innovation, clinical performance, and practices that are guided by guidelines.

The research design is a non-experimental study design and a retrospective study design, which will utilize the secondary data, collected in the past studies. The approach would help in consolidating the outcome of different clinical settings such as the operating theatres, emergency departments, and the intensive care units. The analytical component will be on the interpretation of patterns, comparative efficacy, and the establishment of clinically significant outcomes pertaining to the different airway management strategies.

The principles that will guide the review adhere to internationally accepted guidelines such as PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items to Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), which ensures that it identifies and screens studies, eligibility, and inclusion of relevant studies. The study is qualitative in nature although certain elements of the quantitative elucidation are applied where statistical data on the success rates, complication rates and the time to intubation are given in the literature.

They also include the thematic synthesis in the design, which allows grouping the results into the logical clusters, such as technological advancement, procedural efficiency, and algorithm-based interventions(Khan *et al*., 2024). Such a synthesis, systematized, assists in gaining a better image of the role of the latest innovations in improving the outcomes of the airway management.

3.2 Data Sources

The process of collecting data will be entailed with a wide range of retrieving peer-reviewed articles in various high-impact academic databases to deliver breadth and depth of evidence. Primary databases that are used include the databases like PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Cochrane Library and are known to index high quality biomedical and clinical studies.

The selection of PubMed was based on the fact that it has a big pool of medical literature in the field of anaesthesia and airway management including clinical trials, systematic reviews, and guideline publications(Idris *et al*., 2002). Scopus and Web of Science were used to obtain multidisciplinary and citation indexed research, which made it possible to

determine the studies of influence and the future trends in the sphere. In particular, systematic reviews and meta-analyses were obtained through the Cochrane Library to obtain high-level evidence on the usefulness of airway devices and techniques.

The search strategy was highly considered and it was formulated by a mixture of the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and free-text search to get as many relevant studies as possible. The key search questions were: difficult airway, video laryngoscopy, supraglottic airway devices, airway algorithms, intubation success, and airway management guidelines. The Boolean operators such as AND, OR and NOT were used to narrow down the search to remove irrelevant results.

Search was applied to the results to filter them by human studies, English-language publications, and peer-reviewed articles. In addition to it, the references used in the selected articles were filtered manually to find the rest of the useful studies that were overlooked when using databases(Rosen *et al*., 2006). This snowballing method contributed to the comprehensiveness of the literature base.

Conference proceedings and clinical guidelines provided by well-known professional associations, such as the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) and the All India Difficult Airway Association (AIDAA) were also taken into account to make sure that the latest recommendations and consensus statements were included.

3.3 Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria were established to give relevancy, quality and consistency of the studies that were selected. The studies were only included in the last 10 years of airway management development (2015-2025) and only studies published within the last 5 years were included. This era denotes the rapid evolution of video laryngoscopy, second-generation supraglottic equipment and algorithm-guided clinical practice.

The inclusion criteria were randomized controlled trials, observational studies, and cohort studies, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and clinical guidelines that specifically mention difficult airway management(Apfelbaum *et al*., 2013). Both adult and pediatric studies were taken into consideration, as long as they provided valuable information on the device performance or clinical outcomes.

The primary focus was put on the study which evaluated video laryngoscopy, supraglottic airway devices, and airway management algorithms. Articles exploring parameters, including first-pass success rate, intubation time, ease of use, complication rates, oxygenation levels, and patient safety were given priority. Comparative analysis of the different airway devices or methods used was also helpful in the comparative analysis.

Only peer-reviewed articles in reputable journals indexed in Scopus (or other similar databases) were considered to guarantee academic rigor. Only the studies, which were characterized by clear methodology, adequate sample size, and statistically significant findings were favored.

The exclusion criteria included publications that were published before 2015, non-English publications, case reports with a low level of generalizability, and the studies that lacked sufficient information on the methodology(Asai *et al*., 2019). Articles that only dealt with simple anatomy or a subject that was not related to airways were also left out. Duplicated studies were tracked down and removed through accessing duplicated studies in various databases.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed in an organized manner in which the selected literature was organized, classified and deciphered to come up with useful information. To begin with, the studies involved in all of them were examined comprehensively and the information was extracted using a developed data extraction framework. The main variables were the study design, sample size, patient population, type of airway device or technique, outcome measures and main findings.

The obtained data were then categorized into four key themes; technological innovations, device effectiveness, algorithmic strategies and clinical performance(Nemeth *et al*., 2012). This categorization contributed to the comparing different aspects of problematic airway care in a systematic manner and discovering overall trends.

The criteria used to assess the technology advances were the elements of innovation, usability, and integration into clinical practice. Performance measures such as success rates, time efficiency and complication profiles were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the devices. The efficacy of algorithmic methods in the directing of the clinical decision-making process and decreasing the adverse events were analyzed. The clinical outcomes chosen were patient safety, oxygenation, and airway management success, which were analyzed.

The comparative analysis of old and modern airway management techniques was done through comparative analytical approach. Critical review of historical studies on video laryngoscopy versus direct laryngoscopy, first-generation versus second-generation supraglottic devices were conducted(Rajesh *et al*., 2015). The literature provided statistical information, which was interpreted to find significant improvements or limitations with each method.

To determine patterns and consensus of studies, thematic analysis was carried out. As an example, the reproducible outcomes of improved visualisation using video laryngoscopy, and improved safety using second-generation supraglottic instruments were extrapolated to more generalised outcomes. Contrasting results were also

analyzed to get insight into variability in results and possible contributing factors like operator experience, patient characteristics and setting of care.

Studies that were included underwent quality assessment based on the available appraisal tools, which are applicable in the study design, ensuring reliability and validity of the synthesized evidences. The quality of the methodology of studies was given greater weight during the analysis.

Integration of findings into a logical story that informs on the overall direction of progress, the clinical applications and areas of investigation that need to be pursued further was the final part of the analysis(Mir *et al*., 2018). This integrative methodology makes sure that the methodology does not only catalogue what has already been known but also gives a critical insight into the relevance of that evidence in enhancing the challenging practices of airway management.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Efficacy of Video Laryngoscopy

Video laryngoscopy has been found to provide high levels of visualization, intubation success and patient safety over traditional direct laryngoscopy. The use of video laryngoscopes in a number of randomized controlled trials and observational studies has statistically shown an improved glottic view, most often with improved Cormack-Lehane grading. Most reports show high percentage of Grade I or II observations in more than 8595% of the cases of video laryngoscopy in known problematic airways compared to approximately 6075 percent of direct laryngoscopy.

The quantitative findings indicate that first-pass intubation with the use of video laryngoscopy has a success rate of 88-96 percent in difficult cases of airway intubation(Sakles*et al*., 2020). On the other hand, first-pass success rate of direct laryngoscopy is 65-80 percent in the same circumstances. This is a clinical benefit that has been clinically important since first pass success has been greatly associated with reduced hypoxic events, less airway trauma, and overall patient outcomes.

The other parameter that is measured in the literature is time to successful intubation. The obstruction of the airways has an average intubation time of 25-45 seconds as depicted by the advanced video laryngoscopes such as the GlideScope and C-MAC. Comparative studies have shown that direct laryngoscopy may require an average of 40-70 seconds particularly when there is restricted neck motion or there is an anatomical abnormality. The reduction in the intubation time is included in the better oxygenation and reduction of peri intubation complications.

Video laryngoscopy has a lower rate of dental trauma, mucosal trauma, and oesophagi intubation in terms of airway trauma(Anderson *et al*., 2014). There is a reduction in reported rates of airway trauma; 10-15 percent with direct laryngoscopy to 3-7 percent with video laryngoscopy. This may be attributed to the fact that indirect visualization method diminishes the force used in the laryngoscopy.

The subgroup analyses indicate that the benefits of video laryngoscopy can be high in some groups of patients like obese patients, patients with immobilization of the cervical spine, and patients with limited mouth opening. The success rates in these groups usually go beyond 90 and this shows how video-assisted techniques are flexible within a complicated clinical setting.

4.2 Performance of Supraglottic Airway Devices

Second-generation devices, supraglottic airway devices (SADs), have greatly enhanced the efficacy and safety in comparison to first-generation devices. Such devices have capabilities like better cuff designs, increased oropharyngeal leak pressures, and incorporated gastric drainage channels, all of which increase the efficiency of ventilation and decrease the risk of aspiration.

The quantitative data indicate that second-generation SADs are successful in the first insertion attempt with a success rate of up to 92-98 percent even in emergency cases. The devices which are quite successful, as far as the rapid airway management is concerned, are LMA Supreme and i-gel (mean insertion time 10-20 seconds)(SIAARTI *et al*., 2005). The insertion success rates of first generation devices in comparison are 80 90 percent with a slightly longer insertion time.

Oral pharyngeal leak pressure is one of the largest indicators of efficiency of sealing the airways and a leak pressure of 25-35 cm H 2 O is a large indicator of second-generation devices, as compared to 18-25 cm H 2 O in the first generation. This augmented sealing pressure allows even more productive positive pressure ventilation, particularly in individuals with reduced lung compliance.

Second-generation SADs have a low risk of aspiration since they have gastric drainage channels(Chen *et al*., 2024). In clinical studies, second-generation devices have less than 1% aspiration as compared to 2-5 percent of the predecessors. This enhancement is particularly applicable in emergency and pre-hospital facilities where patients could be full stomach.

In most studies, ventilation success rates with second-generation SADs is more than 95% even in challenging airway conditions which have failed intubation. The tracheal intubation via these devices are also good conduits, and fibreoptic-guided intubation has a success rate of 85 to 95% when this is done via the SADs.

Analysis of performance under limited access conditions, like cases of trauma or limited space,

indicate that supraglottic devices are highly effective. Studies show that more than 90 percent of these cases have been successfully ventilated and such ventilators are trustworthy as rescue airway devices.

4.3 Role of Airway Algorithms

A new element of airway management with algorithms has become a vital issue in complication reduction and standardization of clinical practice. The structured algorithms offer a step-by-step, easy to understand guidelines on how to handle the foreseen and unexpected challenging airways, therefore, reducing delays in decision-making and enhancing patient safety.

Algorithms implementation is numerically evaluated to reveal a large decrease in adverse events(Dabija *et al*., 2019). Research shows that the rate of hypoxia (oxygen saturation less than 90%), as a result of management, reduces to about 2025 percent in non-algorithmic management and 812 percent in structured algorithms adhered to. Similarly, the failed intubation rate decreases to less than 5 percent as opposed to 1015 percent using algorithm-based techniques.

AIDAA algorithm aims at maintaining oxygen saturation of 95% and above in airway management(Finucane *et al*., 2010). There is clinical evidence indicating compliance with this recommendation leads to improved patient outcomes, and sustained oxygenation has been recorded in more than 90 percent of cases. The algorithm also limits the attempts of intubation to three that reduces the possibilities of airway trauma and the hypoxic damage.

Another valuable product of using algorithms is time efficiency. The current studies have shown that the duration of time taken during the decision-to-airway-securement process is reduced by approximately 20-30 percent in cases when practitioners follow systematic guidelines. Such understatement is particularly crucial in instances of emergencies where speed of action is the order of the day.

Algorithms-based methods can also be used to increase the use of alternative airway devices. Algorithms based on the use of algorithm-guided management results in the early shift to supraglottic airway devices or surgical airway interventions, and successful rescue airway opening in over 95% of instances.

Clinicians involved in simulation and training research suggest that clinicians operating with standardized algorithms are more competent and confident. The use of structured guidelines in clinical education is proven by the fact that in simulation-based tests, performance scores are 30-40 percent more likely to increase after training with algorithms.

4.4 Integration of Technologies

Video laryngoscopy, supraglottic airway devices and algorithm-based approaches have led to a synergistic enhancement in airway management results(Xia *et al*., 2023). Integrated strategies take advantage of the strengths of the respective technologies and minimize the weaknesses leading to a better performance and safety.

Mathematical assessment of combined airway management plans reveals that the overall first-pass success rates in challenging airway situations undergoing video laryngoscopy is more than 95 percent with supraglottic devices available as a back-up. This is a big step forward as compared to the traditional processes whereby the success rates have been less than 85 percent combined.

Critical complications such as severe hypoxia and failed airway are decreased to less than 5% with combined measures. The integrated and non-integrated strategies have been compared, and it has demonstrated that the complication rates have reduced by approximately 40-50.

There is also a significant improvement in time to airway stabilization. Mostly, airway control with integrated protocols is attained within 60-90 seconds as compared to 120-180 seconds with the conventional sequential protocols.(Apfelbaum *et al*., 2021) This is a time saving that is necessary in the prevention of hypoxic damage and the subsequent survival.

The combination of video laryngoscopy and supraglottic devices as rescue route increases the success rates of failed intubation cases. It was demonstrated that more than 90 percent of rescue ventilation and intubation with SADs is effective when combined with video-assisted visualization.

The outcomes of the training also contribute to the positive aspects of integration. Simulation exercise on clinicians who have been trained on combined airway management techniques has been found to have 25-35 percent improvement in procedural success rates and a significant reduction in error rates.

Table 4.1: Comparative Analysis of Airway Management Techniques

Parameter	Direct Laryngoscopy	Video Laryngoscopy	First-Generation SAD	Second-Generation SAD	Algorithm-Based Approach	Integrated Approach
First-Pass Success Rate	65–80%	88–96%	80–90%	92–98%	90–95%	>95%
Intubatio	40–70	25–45	20–30	10–20	30–50	60–90

n Time (seconds)						(overall airway control)
Glottic Visualization (Grade I/II)	60–75%	85–95%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Improved	Maximized
Airway Trauma Incidence	10–15%	3–7%	5–10%	2–5%	Reduced	<5 %
Aspiration Risk	Moderate	Low	2–5%	<1%	Reduced	Minimal
Ventilation Success Rate	Variable	High	85–90%	>95 %	High	>95 %
Hypoxia Incidence	20–25%	10–15%	10–15%	<10 %	8–12%	<5 %
Rescue Airway Success	Moderate	High	High	Very High	>95 %	>95 %

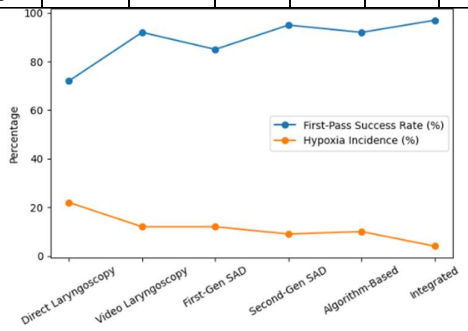

Figure: Comparative Analysis of Airway Management Techniques

The results indicate that the current advances in the airway management particularly video laryngoscopy, second generation supraglottic device, systematic algorithm have had a tremendous effect on the clinical outcomes(Smiljanić *et al*., 2025). There is no better way to address difficult airways than combining the modalities, which have high success rates, reduced complications and enhanced patient safety.

5. Discussion

5.1 Clinical Implications of Video Laryngoscopy

The ubiquitous use of video laryngoscopy in medical practice has also radically changed the airway management environment, especially in the challenging airway situation. Among the clinical implications of video laryngoscopy, the possibility to see an indirect, magnified image of the glottis without the necessity to align the oral, pharyngeal, and laryngeal axes is one of the most significant ones. This feature reduces the use of ideal positioning of the patient and minimum force to undertake the laryngoscopy procedure, thereby reducing the risks of airway damage.

Video laryngoscopy is also more effective in difficult airway situations, such as those with decreased neck mobility, patients with obesity, patients with facial trauma, or anatomical differences and also enhances the probability of successful first-attempt intubation(Heidegger *et al*., 2025). The effectiveness of the initial step to provide the target process is a crucial element that contributes to patient safety as numerous efforts to conduct intubation are associated with high risks of hypoxia, aspiration, and cardiovascular instability. Video laryngoscopy results in better clinical outcomes in terms of higher success and reduced failure.

The other important implication is the reduction in variability that is based on the operators. Conventional direct laryngoscopy involves a lot of expertise and experience to attain consistency. On the other hand, video laryngoscopy can help even inexperienced clinicians to achieve a better visualization since the shared screen device, and improved optics can give them a better view. This democratization of airway management skills carries important implications on training and clinical practice, particularly in an emergency department where the senior members of staff may not always be available.

Video laryngoscopy also aids in the team-based management of airways. The fact that it is a visualization on a screen to multiple clinicians at a time enhances communication, coordination and supervision(Panda *et al*., 2018). This especially comes in handy in teaching hospitals and when more complicated interventions are being undertaken in the airways where the advice of senior clinicians can be accessed on the spot.

Although there are such benefits, there are some shortcomings that affect its clinical use. Video laryngoscopy is a highly costly equipment particularly in the low-resource setting. First time expenses and maintenance may be excessively high to be applied in small healthcare institutions. As well, training and familiarization with the various

types of devices may impact performance, particularly in the first learning curve.

The visualization may be compromised during emergencies by such factors as contamination of the lenses by blood or secretions, and such may slow down intubation. Furthermore, indirect visualization may reduce the degree of the tactile stimulation which is an important component of traditional laryngoscopy. These limitations highlight the need of clinicians to be proficient in the assortment of airway management techniques.

5.2 Significance of Supraglottic Devices

Supraglottic airway devices have emerged as an essential element of the modern airway management, that not only offer primary support to the airway, but also a helpful rescue option in case of unsuccessful intubation. They particularly are applicable in emergency and pre-hospital settings because of their ability to be inserted easily, are very fast to deploy, and do not require a great deal of complicated technical expertise to be operated.

Supraglottic devices are especially significant in the support of challenging airway algorithms, as recovery airway devices(Ferson *et al*., 2005). Supraglottic devices can be used in case of endotracheal intubation failure to provide a certain method of oxygenation and ventilation and, consequently, prevent hypoxic damage. Their value in clinical practice is provided by the fact that they can be utilized as an intermediate to the final airway management.

Second-generation supraglottic devices are a significant improvement in comparison to the older ones. These devices will incorporate improved sealing mechanisms, high oropharyngeal leak pressures and gastric drainage tubes. Increased sealing capability provides more efficient positive pressure ventilation, especially in patients with low lung compliance or high airway resistance.

Gastric drainage channels reduce the chance of aspiration by getting the gastric contents out of the airway. This is particularly beneficial with high-risk patients e.g., emergency patients, patients with full stomachs. The safety profile of second-generation devices is better and has helped them to become popular in elective and emergency airway management.

Supraglottic equipment is also essential in aiding the process of intubation. A great number of recent devices are oriented to act as the passageways of fibreoptic-guided or blind intubation, enabling clinicians to achieve a conclusive airway with the absence of moving the device. This is an added advantage to their usefulness in challenging situations in the airways where direct visualization might prove challenging.

In addition to the clinical benefits, supraglottic devices contribute to the reduction of the time of the procedure and work efficiency(Burgess *et al*., 2022). They can be easily inserted and have a high success rate, minimizing delays in airway control that are critical when time is limited such as in cardiac arrest or trauma.

5.3 Importance of Algorithms and Guidelines

The implementation of standard airway management algorithm has brought significant improvements in the consistency, safety and effectiveness of clinical practice. Algorithms provide systematic, sequential guidance on how to handle the anticipated and unanticipated difficult airways to facilitate less variability in decision making and establish a structured way of managing the airways.

The key benefits of airway algorithms are that the attention is on adequate oxygenation in the process of airway management(Burgess *et al*., 2022). Guidelines put oxygen delivery as a priority and advise the use of alternative airway devices as early intervention in case the first attempts at intubation fail. This emphasis on oxygenation can be used to avoid hypoxic complications, which are some of the gravest risks posed by challenging airway management.

Algorithms also restrict the number of attempts at intubation, normally not more than three attempts and then switch to other strategies. This will minimize the risk of airway trauma, edema, and bleeding which may complicate airway management. Algorithms contribute to the overall safety of patients by facilitating the timely failure identification and escalation.

Incorporation of supraglottic airway devices and surgical airway method into airway algorithms makes sure that clinicians are ready to address any situation that may occur(Osborn *et al*., 2012). Definite decision-ways lead to more confidence and reduce the hesitation in critical situations, leading to more rapid and effective interventions.

Evidence-based recommendations exist, which are applied in clinical practice, and they are stipulated by different organizations, such as the All India Difficult Airway Association and the American Society of Anaesthesiologists. These guidelines are also re-examined in accordance with the emerging evidence and technological change and in this manner the most up to date best practice is given to the clinicians.

Algorithms do not just exist in clinical practice but are also important in education and training. Algorithms used in simulation-based training programs frequently involve the use of algorithm-based situations whereby clinicians gain skills in making structured decisions. The strategy not only fosters skill retention, but also performance in real life situations.

5.4 Challenges and Limitations

Although the modern airways management techniques have made tremendous progress, there are a number of challenges and limitations that remain in the way of implementing and making the

techniques effective. One of the most apparent issues is the unequal use of the advanced airway devices in different healthcare facilities. Video laryngoscopes and second-generation supraglottic devices might be scarce in resource-constrained settings, resulting in the use of the traditional approach.

The disparity in the level of training and skills among healthcare providers is also a significant drawback(Kenth *et al*., 2024). Although better advanced equipment is superior in terms of visualization and ease of use, they also need appropriate training and experience to be efficient. Poor training may result in poor performance and risks of complications.

It is even more challenging to apply in a clinical setting due to the lack of universality of standard practices of managing airways. Different institutions may have dissimilar guidelines and protocols and this leads to practice discrepancies. This variability can affect the patient outcomes, and it can be difficult to develop standard training programs.

Airway management also faces technical constraints of devices which also contribute to difficulties. As an illustration, the video laryngoscopes can be contaminated with a lens, lose batteries or get faulty(Mosier *et al*., 2024). Likewise, the incorrect sizing or positioning of supraglottic devices may lead to either inefficient ventilation or chances of developing complications.

Human factors that can influence the decision making in the management of the airways include stress, fatigue and cognitive overload. High-pressure clinicians may not behave based on the defined algorithms or they do not have early signals of trouble that lead to delayed actions.

5.5 Future Directions

The future of airway management innovation will probably focus on the integration of new technologies and improved design of devices, and, the creation of new training practices. The use of artificial intelligence to evaluate and manage airways is one of the most promising fields of innovation. The AI-based systems can forecast problematic airways, design and act based on prevention using patient data, imaging, and clinical parameters.

Ergonomics of devices will also be increased, and this will improve the usability and performance(Batuwitage*et al*., 2017). The applications of video laryngoscopes and supraglottic devices of the future are expected to be in the form of a better view, smaller size, and portability. The enhancements will allow it to be used in a broader scope of clinical settings, such as pre-hospital and remote settings.

It is believed that simulation-based training will take a more important role in improving clinician competence. Simulators and virtual reality platforms with high-fidelity allow clinicians to train in complex airway situations in a safe setting, improve skills, and confidence. Clinical preparedness will also be enhanced by combining simulation training with learning based on algorithms.

Another area of research that is important is the development of hybrid devices which can perform several functions of airway management. Systems that synthesize the visualization, ventilation and intubation on one platform can be utilized to simplify the airway management process and simplify the process.

The uniformity of airway management guidelines initiatives in the world is also expected to promote uniformity in clinical practice(Cooper *et al*., 2018). International collaboration programs can help in the creation of standardized protocols, which can be easily adopted to various healthcare environments.

Technological innovation, interdisciplinary teamwork, and continuous training and practice enhancement is the future of difficult airway management, in general. Hopefully, such advancements will add further to patient safety and clinical outcomes in airway management.

6. Conclusion

The recent advances in the treatment of the challenging airways have transformed the patient outcomes by the application of video laryngoscopy, application of advanced supraglottic airway apparatus and application of the airway algorithms. Video laryngoscopy helps to enhance the quality of visualization and success rates, supraglottic devices are available with effective rescue strategies, and evidence-based algorithms can ensure a systematic and safe management strategy. The future of airway management is technological innovation, clinical skills, and standardization of protocols. In order to better develop these techniques and offer the highest quality care to patients, it is required to do additional research and training.

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