Frey procedure in patients with chronic pancreatitis: short and long-term outcome from a prospective study

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Titre Frey procedure in patients with chronic pancreatitis: short and long-term outcome from a prospective study
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BACKGROUND: The aim of this prospective study was to determine the short- and long-term results of the Frey procedure in the treatment of chronic pancreatitis.

METHODS: From September 2000 to November 2009, 44 consecutive patients underwent the Frey procedure. Patients were included in the study before surgery and followed prospectively with assessment of pain relief, weight gain and exocrine/endocrine insufficiency. Twenty-one patients (47.7%) were followed for more than 5 years.

RESULTS: This study included 40 men (91%) and four women (9%) (mean age: 49 years) with a mean follow-up of 51.5 months. The primary etiology of chronic pancreatitis was chronic alcohol abuse in 38 patients (86.4%). The major indication for surgery was disabling pain (95.5%). There was no postoperative mortality. Postoperative morbidity occurred in 15 patients (34.1%), with specific surgical complications in 11 patients (25%). The percentage of pain-free patients after surgery was 68.3%. Eight patients (18.1%) and seven patients (16%) developed diabetes de novo and exocrine insufficiency, respectively. The Body Mass Index showed statistically significant improvement during follow-up. Similar beneficial results concerning pain relief and weight gain persisted after the initial 5-year follow-up.

CONCLUSIONS: The Frey procedure is an appropriate, safe and effective technique for management of patients with chronic pancreatitis in the absence of neoplasia, based on long-term follow-up.
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