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Oral Presentation

Iatrogenic Nerve Injuries

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Abstract

Nerve injuries are called “iatrogenic” if they have happened during a medical procedure. They are a relevant problem. We report our personal experience with 340 such patients operated from 1990 to 2012. Among the potential causes surgical procedures and among these orthopedic and traumatological interventions are the most frequent ones. They are followed by lymph node resection in the lateral triangle at the neck and by carpal tunnel release. If a patient has been neurologically normal before surgery but after surgery suffers from a functional deficit attributable to a peripheral nerve, common sense should come to the conclusion that something must have happened to the nerve during this procedure. However, in reality, if at all, this conclusion is often taken rather late. Only 35% of such patients arrived at our department within an interval of 6 months after injury. Although it is well known that the results of nerve repair are best when it is done as early as possible. Among 148 patients examined at least 3 months after our surgery, 26% had significantly improved. Another 45% were better than before surgery, 26% had remained unchanged so far and 3% were worse. We like to emphasize the importance of an early diagnosis and treatment of these iatrogenic nerve injuries.

Keywords: Nerve Injury, Surgery, Iatrogenic.

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