

THE NUSS PROCEDURE FOR PECTUS EXCAVATUM - FINAL RESULTS AFTER REMOVAL OF THE PECTUSBAR IN 50 PATIENTS

H.K. Pilegaard, P. Licht, Aarhus, Denmark

OBJECTIVE

The pathophysiology of pectus excavatum is unknown but many patients are disabled from this thoracic deformity. The Nuss operation is a well established technique for correction but until recently the operation was rarely used in Europe. We have performed the Nuss operation regularly since 2001 and the aim of the present study was to investigate our final results.

METHODS

From 2001-2006 a total of 312 patients were operated for pectus excavatum. The indication for surgery was disabling cosmetic appearance as described by the patient. All operations were performed by the same surgeon and the pectusbar was routinely removed after three years. All patient records were reviewed for retrospective analysis.

RESULTS

The median age was 16 years (range 7-43) and 85% were males. Operative mortality was zero. A satisfactory perioperative result was achieved in all but one patient using one pectus bar (87%), two bars (13%) or three bars (1 patient). At present the bars have been removed in 50 patients and their final result was excellent in all but one.

CONCLUSIONS

The Nuss procedure for pectus excavatum can be implemented with excellent final results after removal of the pectusbar. The number of referred patients continues to rise as patients and referring physicians learn about the ease and superiority of this procedure. These findings should encourage other Scandinavian centres to develop a Nuss procedure programme for pectus excavatum.