

Is progressive preoperative pneumoperitoneum (PPP) really safe? Assessment of its specific morbi-mortality in a retrospective study over 152 patients

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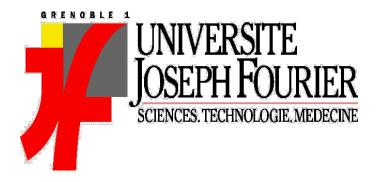
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ANNEE 2015

FACULTE DE MEDECINE DE GRENOBLE

Le pneumopéritoine progressif préopératoire (selon Goni Moreno) est-il sûr ?

Etude rétrospective sur 152 patients pour évaluer sa morbi-mortalité spécifique.

THESE PRESENTEE POUR L'OBTENTION DU DOCTORAT EN MEDECINE DIPLÔME D'ETAT

MOUGIN Nicolas

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Le pneumopéritoine progressif préopératoire (selon Goni Moreno) est-il sûr? Etude rétrospective sur 152 patients pour évaluer sa morbi-mortalité spécifique.

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Objectif: Evaluer la morbi-mortalité spécifique du pneumopéritoine progressif préopératoire (PPP) dans la prise en charge des éventrations larges de l'abdomen.

Patients et méthodes:

Etude monocentrique, constituée d'une cohorte rétrospective de 152 patients, traités entre Octobre 1974 et Février 2014.

Le critère principal est le taux de complications induites par le PPP. Les objectifs secondaires concernent les résultats des techniques chirurgicales (taux de complications postopératoires, taux de récidive).

Résultats:

Le taux de complications spécifiques au PPP est de 20% : 15% de complications mineures, 5% de complications majeures. Le taux de mortalité est inférieur à 1%.

La cure chirurgicale a été réalisée dans 98,6% des cas (91% avec une prothèse de renfort pariétal). Le taux de complications postopératoires est de 40% (mineures 20%, majeures 16%); le taux de mortalité est inférieur à 3%. La durée médiane d'hospitalisation est de 30 jours. Le taux de récidive est de 15% (suivi médian de 12 mois).

Conclusions:

Le PPP n'est pas dénué de risques, les 5% de complications majeures incitent à ne pas l'utiliser en ambulatoire. L'utilisation d'un cathéter intrapéritonéal placé chirurgicalement, sans dépasser 2 semaines d'insufflations, pourrait permettre de baisser sa morbi-mortalité spécifique.

Une prise en charge multidisciplinaire péri-opératoire (nutrition, chirurgie bariatrique) et l'emploi de nouveaux procédés chirurgicaux (préservation des artères perforantes, prothèses biologiques) pourraient améliorer les résultats chirurgicaux.

<u>Mots clés</u>: éventration large de l'abdomen, perte du droit de cité, pneumopéritoine, prothèse pariétale

Is progressive preoperative pneumoperitoneum (PPP) really safe? Assessment of its specific morbi-mortality in a retrospective study over 152 patients.

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Objective: To assess PPP specific morbi-mortality, before large abdominal hernia repair.

Patients and methods:

Monocentric retrospective study over 152 patients, treated between October 1974 and February 2014.

Primary endpoint is PPP related morbidity and mortality rates. Secondary endpoints are surgical care results (postoperative complications rate, recurrence rate).

Results:

PPP specific complications rate is 20%: 15% for minor complications, 5% for major complications. Mortality rate is inferior to 1%.

Surgical repair rate is 98.9% (91% with mesh reinforcement). Postoperative complications rate reach 40% (minor 20%, major 16%); mortality is inferior to 3%. Median length of stay is 30 days. Recurrence rate is 15% (median follow up of 12 months).

Conclusions:

PPP is not totally safe, and with its 5% of major complications, we do not recommend to use it on an outpatient basis. Using surgically placed intraperitoneal catheter, with less than 2 weeks of insufflation period, may decrease its specific morbi-mortality.

Multidisciplinary perioperative management program (nutrition, bariatric surgery) and new surgical techniques (perforating arteries sparing, biological mesh) should improve surgical results.

Keys words: large hernia, loss of domain, pneumoperitoneum, mesh

Introduction

Incisional hernia is a frequent complication after abdominal surgery. Some of these patients have a large incisional hernia, defined by the European Hernia Society as a fascial defect of 10 cm or more in any direction(1). They are often associated with severe symptoms (chronic pain or wounds, respiratory disturbance...) resulting in a decreased quality of life. Surgical repair of such defects is known to be challenging, regarding patient's history (obesity, severe co-morbidities, abdominal traumatism or infection, previous mesh repair) and hernia's characteristics (loss of domain, contamination status). Slater and al summarized criteria for definition of complex abdominal wall hernia, and proposed three patient severity classes to assess the risk of a complicated post-operative course(2).

A feared complication is that the abdominal wall closure creates an abdominal hypertension, or even an abdominal compartment syndrome, who can lead to multi-visceral organ failure and to death(3,4). To prevent this, preoperative progressive pneumoperitoneum (PPP) has been described in 1947. The « Goni Moreno protocol » prepares the patient for the increased abdominal pressure after hernia repair(5). Since then, the effect of PPP have been demonstrated: respiratory rehabilitation(6), abdominal wall muscles lengthening(7), enlargement of the peritoneal cavity(8). Some authors even suggest that PPP will facilitate the surgery by progressive adhesions air-dissection(9). With these multiple effects, PPP allows us to operate patients that would be otherwise unfit for hernia repair surgery.

Many reports of PPP use have been published, but most of them are based on a small population size. It is sometimes difficult to know which type of hernia were treated (LIH, loss of domain, ventral or lateral); and the specific morbidity of PPP is rarely fully described, although it is considered « safe » by most of the authors (*Annex 1*). The aim of this study was to evaluate the safety of this procedure over a large population: thus we analysed preoperative

data, morbidity and mortality of PPP, and number of patient that underwent elective surgical repair of their hernia after PPP. We also analysed surgical care and follow-up data to assess mesh repair, postoperative complications and recurrent hernia rates as secondary objective.

Patients and methods

DESIGN

This is a single center study, from the digestive surgery department at Grenoble University Hospital, France. Period of interest runs from October 1974 to February 2014. Data have been collected retrospectively, from patients' charts (paper and informatic, using Cristalnet software).

POPULATION

During this time, 152 patients were selected for our study. Inclusion criterion was enrolment in a PPP program. In our team, we used this strategy when a patient has a large hernia (incisional or not) AND a severity index at least moderate. A large hernia is defined by fascial defect diameter superior to 10 cm. Patient severity index refers to Slater's classification(2). Patients with severe respiratory or cardio circulatory disturbance were excluded, as well as those with infected abdominal wall. We did not use this technique for strangulated hernias. We analyzed demographic data (age, gender) and medical history (cardio circulatory and pulmonary disease, smoking or drinking habits, BMI), and assessed ASA (American Society of Anaesthesiologists) status. We also used morphological hernias' characteristics (size, site) and surgical history (first surgery, incisional or recurrent type, previous mesh repair or infection) to determine Slater's grade.

PROGRESSIVE PREOPERATIVE PNEUMOPERITONEUM

We used two methods to induce a PPP: repeated peritoneal punctures (as Dr Goni Moreno described it(5)), or intraperitoneal surgically placed catheter (connected to subcutaneous chamber or not). Ambient air has been insufflated according to different protocols (constant or increased amount of air, daily or up to every 5 days insufflations). If scapular pain, nausea or dyspnoea appears, insufflations were stopped or delayed. The patient was hospitalized, and received daily kinesiology rehabilitation, and deep venous thrombosis prophylactic treatment. An abdominal belt covered the hernia 24/24h until the surgery, to avoid the full feeling of the hernia only. We stopped the PPP when abdominal muscles relaxation was reached on physical examination.

SURGERY

Our gold standard technique is open surgery, with retromuscular mesh repair (retrorectus for midline hernia – Rives' technique(10), intermuscular for subcostal and flank hernia) or extraperitoneal mesh repair – Stoppa's technique(11) (flank or inguinal hernia); we used Mersilene® mesh - Ethicon, Optilene® mesh - B-Braun, fixed with separated Prolene sutures. If the posterior sheath can't be closed, we used intraperitoneal mesh – IPOM technique (ParietexTM mesh – Covidien), combined to aponeuroplasty(12). We often combined mesh reinforcement and Clotteau Premont anterior aponeuroplasty (13). For contaminated surgery we choosed herniorraphy without mesh (Welti-Eudel aponeuroplasty)(14); more recently we used biological mesh for some hernia repairs. Thus we assessed the Ventral Hernia Working Group (VHWG) classification's grade(15). Sometimes, we combined abdominal wall repair with abdominoplasty. We always used pre and subfascial drains. We removed subfacial drains after 48 hours, but prefascial drains could be kept much longer (seroma, dermolipectomy). Patients had to wear abdominal belt for at least 1 month. We analyzed surgical data (mesh use

or not, mesh position), post-operative complication rates (using Clavien-Dindo's classification), hospital length of stay time, and recurrence rate.

FOLLOW UP

Patients had systematic physical examination 1 month after hospital discharge. As it is a retrospective study, some patients' charts had missing data, and there were some patients lost of follow up. We analyzed skin cicatrisation, wound complications, reoperation rate, and recurrence rate.

STATISTICS

Data were analyzed with basic statistical tools (median, minimum and maximum value, percentage), statistical differences and subgroup analysis were assessed using R software.

Results

POPULATION

Among 152 patients, we treated 81 men and 71 women. Median age was 57 years; 11 patients were over 75 years old (7%), and 14 were under 40 years old (9%). Median BMI (Body Mass Index) was 32 kg/m²; 65% of the patient had BMI over 30 (obesity), and 25% over 40 (morbid obesity).

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	median	n=152	%
	(min-max)		
Sex (men/women)		81/71	53/47
Age (years)	57 (30-83)		_
$BMI(kg/m^2)$	32 (20-53)	_	_

87 patients (59%) had at least 1 cardiovascular disease: the most frequent was arterial hypertension. 81 patients (55%) had at least 1 pulmonary disease; the most frequent was

COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). 22% were smokers, and 21% had diabetes. Half of the patients had an ASA (American Society of Anaesthesiologists) physical status grade 3.

MEDICAL HISTORY	n = 152	%
Cardiologic		
Acute myocardial infarction	12	8
Arrhythmia	11	7
Cardiac insufficiency	5	3
Circulatory		
Arterial hypertension	48	32
Deep venous thrombosis	17	12
Peripheral arteriopathy	16	11
Pulmonary		
COPD	24	16
Sleep apnoea syndrome	20	14
Asthma	9	6
Other		
Smoking	33	22
Diabetes	31	21
Dyslipidemia	19	13
Drinking	18	12
ASA physical status		
1	22	15
2	55	36
3	75	49

Median hernia defect size was 15 cm, with a maximum size of treated hernia of 37 cm. According to EHS classification(1) for primary and incisionnal abdominal wall hernias, we treated 120 (79%) midline hernias, 16 (10%) subcostal hernias, and less than 10% iliac, lumbar or flank hernias. There was a loss of domain for 40 patients (26%), suggested by physical examination: the hernia content cannot be reintegrated in the abdomen (it is fixed by adhesions). Only 4% were primary hernias. 146 (96%) were incisionnal hernias, among which 27% were recurrent (24 had 1 previous repair, 13 had 2 previous repair, 4 had 3 previous repair; 20 had previous mesh implantation). 35 (23%) had previous wound infection, and 9 (6%) had ulcerated skin. We used Slater's criteria of complex abdominal wall hernia to assess our patients' severity classes: 67% were grade II, 33% were grade III.

HERNIAS CHARACTERISTICS	median (min-max)	n = 152	%
Size (cm)	15 (10-37)		
Localisation			
Midline		120	79
Subcostal		16	10
Iliac		10	7
Lumbar- flank		6	4
Reducibility			
Loss of domain		40	26
Surgical history			
Incisionnal		146	96
Recurrent		41	27
Primary		6	4
Abdominal wall history			
Previous wound infection		35	23
Ulcerated skin		9	6
Slater's grade			
II		102	67
III		50	33

PROGRESSIVE PREOPERATIVE PNEUMOPERITONEUM

Both techniques to induced PPP were used equally: 74 patients with surgically placed intraperitoneal catheter, 78 patients with repeated punctures. Median duration of insufflation was 15 days: 5 days for the less compliant abdomen (pain with low volume of insufflated air), up to 44 days for the longest time (at the beginning of PPP use). Specific morbidity was about 20%: complications were cutaneous (9%), digestive (6%), and pulmonary (6%).

PROGRESSIVE PREOPERATIVE PNEUMOPERITONEUM	median (min-max)	n = 152	%
Technique			_
Surgical catheter insertion		74	49
Repeated punctures		78	51
PPP use			_
Duration (days)	15 (5-36)		
Volume (litres)	12 (5-44)		
Morbidity		31	20
Cutaneous		13	9
Digestive		9	6
Pulmonary		9	6
Mortality		1	0.7

There were 15 complications for patients with repeated puncture, and 16 for surgical catheter insertion (no statistical difference, p = 0.84). Complications' rates showed no statistical difference between both groups, although there was a trend for subcutaneous emphysema in the repeated puncture group (p=0.09). Subcutaneous emphysema and pneumomediastinum represented almost half of PPP's complications (48%).

COMPLICATIONS	surgical catheter	repeated punctures	n	statistical difference
Cutaneous	4	9	13	p=0,38
Emphysema	2	8	10	p=0,09
Abscess	2	0	2	p=0,23
Hematoma	0	1	1	p=1
Digestive	6	3	9	p=0,53
Occlusion	3	0	3	p=0,11
Mesenteric insufflation	1	2	3	p=1
Bowel injury	1	1	2	p=1
Hemoperitoneum (torn	1	0	1	p=0,48
adhesions)				
Pulmonary	6	3	9	p=0,32
Pneumomediastinum	3	2	5	p=0,67
Pneumothorax	2	0	2	p=0,23
Acute respiratory	1	1	2	p=1
insufficiency				
Total	16	15	31	p=0,84

Minor morbidity (Clavien I and II) reached 15%, major morbidity (Clavien III, IV, V) 5%. Three patients had specific surgery for PPP complications (abscess, pneumothorax, bowel injury), without hernia repair surgery. Two patients had emergency surgery: one for hemoperitoneum (torn adhesions; day 5 of PPP) leading to skin closure only; one for acute respiratory failure (day 16 of PPP) leading to exploratory laparotomy (no bowel ischemia, aponeuroplasty), then abdominal compartment syndrome (re-laparotomy and VAC closure at H+10), and finally death (multi visceral failure at H+28). Grade III (or superior) complications happened within the first week of PPP; median PPP duration for patients with PPP's complications was 17 days (data not shown).

CLAVIEN CLASSIFICATION	surgical catheter	repeated punctures	n	statistical difference
Minor morbidity			24	
I	6	13	19	p=0,14
II	4	1	5	p=0,14 p=0,02
Major morbidity			7	
III a	4	0	4	p=0,43
III b	2	1	3	p=0,43 p=0,61
IV	0	0	0	
Mortality			•	
V	1	0	1	p=0,48

SURGERY

One patient with ischemic bowel segment (intraoperative findings; day 30 of PPP) underwent bowel resection and skin closure only. One with really large defect (even after component separation technique) had skin closure only. We have been able to repair the hernia of 145 (99%) patients: 132 (90%) with mesh reinforcement, 13 (9%) with aponeuroplasty. We mainly used polyester mesh (82%). We used 3 positions for mesh reinforcement: retromuscular (56%), intraperitoneal (30%), extraperitoneal (14%). Clotteau – Premont anterior aponeuroplasty have been used for 37 patients. 102 (69%) patients had a VHWG (Ventral Hernia Working Group) grade 1 or 2. Two patients underwent bowel resection: we repaired their hernia with intraperitoneal mesh (1 biological). Twelve patients underwent dermolipectomy at the end of the surgery.

ELECTIVE SURGERY	n=147	%
Technique		
Mesh reinforcement	132	90
Aponeuroplasty	13	9
Skin closure only	2	1
Mesh type		
Polyester (Mersilene®/ Parietex TM)	108 (94/14)	82
Polypropylene (Optilene®)	19	14
Biological	5	4
Mesh position		
Retromuscular	74	56
Intraperitoneal	39	30
Extraperitoneal	19	14

Concomitant surgery		
Clotteau – Premont aponeuroplasty	37	26
Dermolipectomy	12	8
Bowel resection	3	0,7
VHWG grade		
1 / 2	25 / 77	17 / 52
3 / 4	45 / 0	31 / 0

We compared patients with repeated punctures and those with surgically placed catheter: there were no difference for mesh reinforcement rate (91% vs. 89%) and aponeuroplasty rate (9% each). We found no significant statistical difference (regarding preoperative data) between the two hernia repair groups (mesh reinforcement and aponeuroplasty). We also compared patients with intraperitoneal mesh and those with retromuscular mesh: they were more obese (median BMI 38 kg/m2 vs. 32), and had more complex medical and surgical history (COPD: 53% vs. 20%, previous wound infection: 41% vs. 10%, LOD: 50% vs. 20%, VHWG grade 3 (56% vs. 19%); data not shown.

POSTOPERATIVE CARE

Median postoperative length of stay was 13 days; median overall length of stay was 30 days. 30 patients (20%) had minor morbidity (Clavien-Dindo grade I or II): superficial skin necrosis, hematoma, small abscess, bowel occlusion. 24 patients (16%) had major morbidity (Clavien-Dindo grade III a or b): abscess, deep fat necrosis: they underwent a second surgery, among which 4 had partial mesh removal and VAC* therapy. Four patients died: 3 during the first postoperative week (2 from severe arrhythmia, 1 from acute mesenteric infarction), 1 at the end of the third postoperative week (COPD history, with bilateral pneumonia).

POST OPERATIVE CARE	median (min-max)	n = 147	%
Length of stay			
Postoperative	13 (4-62)		
Overall	30 (12-87)		
Complications		58	40
Cutaneous			
Superficial necrosis (skin)		15	10
Hematoma		14	9
Seroma		9	6
Deep necrosis (skin and fat)		6	4
Abscess		5	3
Digestive			
Occlusion		2	1
Death			_
Arrhythmia		2	1
Acute mesenteric infarction		1	0,7
Bilateral pneumonia		1	0,7
Clavien-Dindo classification			
I / II		0/30	0 / 20
III a / III b		7 / 17	5 / 12
IV / V		0 / 4	0/3

The two women who died from severe postoperative arrhythmia had the same kind of medical history: age over 70 years old, previous acute myocardial infarction, midline incisionnal hernia with loss of domain repaired with intraperitoneus polyester mesh, after 25 and 27 days of PPP. Patients with grade III complications had specific patterns of medical history: they were older (median age 60 years old vs. 57), half of them had previous abdominal wall complex history (wound infection, skin closure only, skin graft), and underwent dermolipectomy (59%) or bowel resection (67%).

FOLLOW UP

Median time of follow up was 12 months; but 20 (14%) patients were lost to follow up and 53 (37%) had a follow up time inferior to one year. Chronic wound infection reached 8% of the patients: 4 patients had non-absorbable sutures removal, and 3 had partial mesh removal. Global recurrence rate was 13% (18 patients); adjusted (119 patients with at least one year of follow up) recurrence rate was 15%.

FOLLOW UP	median (min-max)	n = 143	%
Follow up			
Time (months)	12 (1-156)		
Less than 12 months		53	37
Missing data		20	3
Complications			
Chronic wound infection		11	8
Sutures removal		4	3
Partial mesh removal		3	2
Recurrent hernia		18	13

Among eleven patients with chronic wound infection, 5 (45%) had surgery after the hernia repair (2 for hematoma, 3 for deep necrosis), and two of them had third surgery for sutures and/or partial mesh removal; 4 (36%) patients had recurrent hernia: they were all women with BMI > 35 kg/m². Among 18 patients with recurrent hernia, all had mesh repair: 12 (67%) retromuscular, 5 (42%) intraperitoneal, 1 extraperitoneal; 5 (42%) had a VHWG grade 3, and 4 patients had chronic wound infection during post-operative course

PATIENTS' FLOW

Annex 2

Discussion

BIAS

By design, our study has methodological bias (missing data, lost of follow up) that we tried to take into account in our results analysis. In the meanwhile, this is the biggest cohort reporting results of progressive preoperative pneumoperitoneum use, giving us appropriate statistical power.

RESULTS

Primary objective

To assess the specific morbi-mortality of the PPP was our primary objective in this study, because we believe it is underestimated in the literature. Previous studies did not specifically quantify this, but in a detailed review of those publications (annex 1) we found a global PPP's morbidity from 4% up to 90%. Most of the time it was minor morbidity (Clavien's grade I or II), but half of the studies had patients that did not underwent hernia repair because of a PPP's complication. At the beginning of PPP use, nausea, pain and subcutaneous emphysema were more reported; by the time, with protocol modifications (change of gas, rhythm and volume of insufflations) and increased patients number, respiratory, cardiovascular and digestive problems appeared.

In our study, among 152 patients selected for the Goni Moreno protocol, 147 (97%) reached the elective surgery time. 5 (3%) patients needed complications care or emergency surgery that put them out of criteria for elective hernia repair. The most frequent complications were cutaneous (9%), digestive (6%), and pulmonary (6%). If cutaneous or catheter related complications did not impact on surgical project, bowel injuries or acute respiratory failure forced surgeons to operate in emergency situations, without the possibility to treat the hernia (or without a mesh reinforcement). One patient died from abdominal compartment syndrome, even after emergency decompression surgery. So, if mortality was rare (inferior to 1%), morbidity reached 20%. Major morbidity (Clavien grade superior to III) happened within the first week, and minor morbidity (Clavien grade inferior to II) seems to increase after the second week of PPP (median time = 17 days). We found no statistical differences for complications rate between the two techniques used to induce PPP (repeated puncture, surgically placed catheter). Bowel occlusion during the second week of PPP should

be considered as a warning sign of mesenteric ischemia (4 patients had occlusion symptoms, 1 developed an abdominal compartment syndrome and 1 had an ischemic bowel segment).

Secondary objective

We also evaluated surgical cares, from mesh placement to follow up. 147 patients reached the elective hernia repair surgery. Intraoperative findings forced us to do a skin closure only for 2 patients (1,4%). The other 145 (98,6%) patients had their hernia repaired: 13 (9%) with aponeuroplasty alone, 132 (91%) with mesh. Patients with midline hernia had a retrorectus mesh in 61% of cases; risk factors for failure of retromuscular mesh reinforcement seems to be obesity > 35kg/m², COPD, previous wound infection, loss of domain and VHWG grade 3. Postoperative morbidity reached 40% of cases: 20% for minor complications, 16% for major complications; risk factors for wound complications seems to be age > 60 years old, complex skin history (skin closure only, skin graft, previous wound infection), concomitant dermolipectomy or bowel resection. 4 patients (2,7%) died from cardiovascular or pulmonary complications (the only common factor was age over 70 years old). We considered that 7 (4,6%) patients had a PPP strategy failure, meaning they had cardio-circulatory or respiratory troubles (PPP is used to avoid these complications): 3 did not tolerate PPP, 4 did not tolerate hernia repair after PPP. For them, median age was 69 years old, median ASA was 3, and median PPP duration was 21 days; they all had at least 1 previous respiratory and 1 cardiocirculatory disease. This pattern may be considered predictive of PPP failure. Median overall hospital length of stay was 30 days. Median follow up was 12 months: chronic wound infection reached 8%, global recurrence rate was 15%. A relevant fact is that all recurrent hernias have been found in women with at least class II obesity (> 35 kg/m²), among which 1 over 2 had VHWG grade 3.

In a recent review, Deerenberg and al summarized large incisional hernia repair techniques and results, with open or laparoscopic surgery, with or without mesh(16). They reported wound complications rate from 13 to 48%, and mortality from 0,4% to 10,4% (these variations depended on the hernia complexity). Our results (morbidity 40%, mortality 2,7%) are concordant to this review, and to those we found in PPP specific studies (morbidity from 8 to 91%, mortality from 0 to 10%). They also showed that sublay (retromuscular), sandwich (extraperitoneal) and aponeuroplasty + IPOM are the three techniques with the lowest recurrence rate (4%): these are the same techniques that we used in our study. On the other side, only a few study compared two groups of patients with loss of domain (with or without PPP): recurrence rate without PPP was 15 to 20%(17)(18). Our high recurrence rate can be explained by the fact that we treated patients with more severe medical history (old people, 50% of the patients with ASA 3, 25% with morbid obesity...) and complex hernia (Slater's grade high in 33% of the cases), including recurrent incisional hernia or hernia with loss of domain.

DISCUSSION

With these results, we can say that the PPP is a risky procedure that surgeons should not use for every one's hernia. There is still no clear algorithm for PPP use. In our opinion, patients should have a high risk of complicated postoperative course, so that PPP benefits will offset its specific risks. Slater's classification(2), with four criteria categories, is an exhaustive and helpful tool for the surgeon to select these patients. But the more complex these patients will be, the more high recurrence rate we will have... bringing us into a vicious circle. So how can we improve our results?

We can think of other surgical techniques that will help the surgeons to treat such hernias. Plastic surgeons have developed tissue expander techniques, to prepare patients with large skin resection to a simultaneous reconstruction surgery. Carr used this after damage control laparotomy, for abdominal wall repair (sometimes with stoma), with good results(19). But it does not have any respiratory rehabilitation effects, or abdominal muscles relaxation. Another solution is local injection of botulinum A toxin in these muscles to induce their paralysis, consequently increasing intra-abdominal volume and decreasing its pressure(20). This study reports safe results on rats, but had never been used with humans. Other techniques are reported, but they are not preoperative treatments: phrenic nerve resection, hernia content's resection, musculo-cutaneous flaps... The Component Separation Technique(21) could be a good option. Agnew and al reported good results with CST combined to mesh repair, which increase intra-abdominal volume without pulmonary disturbance(22). But this technique can't be use for non-ventral hernia or transversal incisional hernia, and does not have the progressive respiratory rehabilitation effect. In a word, there is (to our knowledge) no other equivalent preoperative technique to prepare to surgery both patient's cardio-pulmonary system and abdominal wall tissues.

So, if we choose to stick with PPP, Goni Moreno protocol modifications may help to improve our results. Since its first report, it as already evolved at many times: insufflations gas changes (from nitrous oxide and CO2 to ambient air), various insufflations rhythm and volume (from every five days to daily insufflations), insufflations techniques (from repeated punctures to 3 lumens-catheter surgically placed in the peritoneal cavity). Nowadays, most of surgical teams use daily ambient air insufflations (with antibacterial filter). But the question of how long we should induce PPP does not have a consensus answer. Moreno stopped the procedure when bulging of the flanks was noted (abdominal wall stretching was considered as enough). But to reach this goal, PPP may be induced for very long time (up to 40 days). In our study, we showed that complications rate increased during the third week. For Willis, PPP should not exceed 6-10 days, arguing that after this time only intra-abdominal pressure will

increase, but intraperitoneal volume will not(23). Mason and Murr may have an explanation for these late complications, saying that compression of the vena cava or renal vein will occur with larger volume(24)(25). For these reasons, Tanaka and al studied volumetric changes during PPP(26): they described a technique to assess abdominal cavity and hernia sac volume, that will give objective data to include patients in a PPP program, and also to calculate the volume of gas that should be insufflated before surgery. We agree with the real impact of preoperative abdominal computerized tomography (every patient should have one, especially obese patients), because it allows good evaluation of defect size and location, and quality of muscular and aponeurotic layers. But Tanaka's article has some limitations: it only considered PPP for hernia with loss of domain, and a random cutoff at 25% for volume ratio between hernia sac and intra-abdominal volume was used (but loss of domain was defined for lower ratio volume: for example, it was 15-20% for Kingsnorth(27)). Volumetric effects of PPP were later studied(8)(28), Sabbagh and al even assessed a significant ratio volume cut off at 20%(29). Based on this review, we suggest to assess the hernia sac volume on tomography, then to insufflate its equivalent amount of gas within a maximum of two weeks, and -if this PPP allows bulging of the abdominal muscles- to operate the patient.

Finally, we come to surgical cares and their outcomes. As we saw previously, our higher recurrent hernia rate (than in Deerenberg's review) can be explained by our more complicated patients. Indeed, most of them had more than two risks factors for wound complications (especially age > 60 years old and previous wound complication). Patients with concomitant bowel resection or dermolipectomy also had a significantly increased wound complications rate. Another important fact is that all recurrent hernia occurred for women with BMI > 35kg/m². In 1956, Mason already assessed morbid obesity role in high recurrence rate, telling surgeon to first treat overweight with bariatric surgery, before even thought of hernia repair(24). Technical progress (laparoscopy) and long-term results (effects on

metabolism, allowing better control of diabetes or dyslipidemia) of bariatric surgery make Mason's strategy even more actual. But patients over 60 years old (half of patients eligible for PPP) often fail in pursuing bariatric preoperative program (alimentary habits changes, physical exercises rehabilitation, medical comorbidities control), and therefore are unfit for elective bariatric surgery. Even if they do follow this program, laparoscopic bariatric surgery is really uneasy when patients have large abdominal hernia. Nevertheless, we now insist on the fact that surgery is not an option until patients have lost weight, stop smoking, healed their previous wound complications, and changed their physical exercise habits; if needed, we work with a rehabilitation center to help them achieving these goals. On a more technical point of view, wound complications rate may decrease if we find ways to preserve tissue vascularisation. Some authors noticed that anterior aponeuroplasty or component separation technique damage perforating arteries, decreasing blood flow to the skin. And perorating arteries sparing techniques already exists: endoscopic component separation technique (CST)(30), Transversus Abdominis Release (TAR) which is a posterior CST(31), Open Periumbilical Perforator Sparing Components Separation (OPUPS)(32). At last, using biological mesh may have a place for these patients (grade 2 or 3 of VHWG classification)(15), but there is a lack of data for now (especially long term recurrence rate).

CONCLUSIONS

Progressive preoperative pneumoperitoneum is not always safe, and exposes patients to rare but potentially severe complications such as bowel injury or cardio-pulmonary disturbance, and even death. Therefore, we do not use it in an outpatient basis, even if it increases overall hospital length of stay (and hospitalisation cost). Inducing PPP with intraperitoneal surgically placed catheter and without exceeding two weeks of daily insufflations may decrease its specific morbi-mortality.

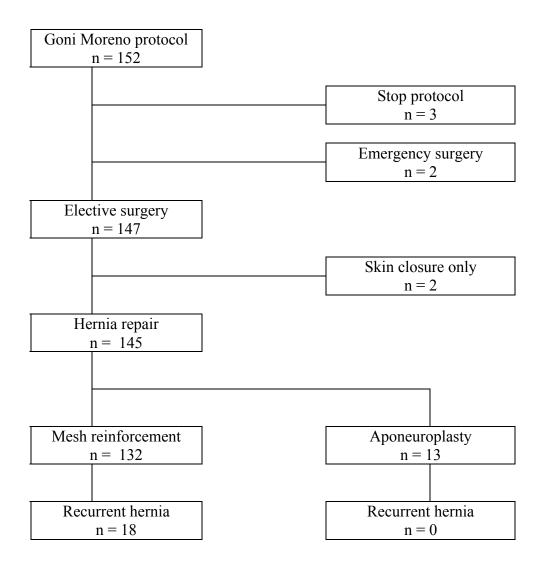
This simple technique allowed us to bring almost all of our complex patients to their hernia repair, who would have been otherwise unfit for surgery. If surgical mesh reinforcement rate was good, wound complications and recurrence rates were high. Previous bariatric surgery, avoiding concomitant bowel resection or dermolipectomy, perforating arteries sparing techniques should be considered as relevant options to improve these results. With this in mind, we tried to create an algorithm for patients with complex abdominal hernia we want to include in a PPP program (*Annex 3*).

Annex 1: Literature review (23, 25, 33–54)

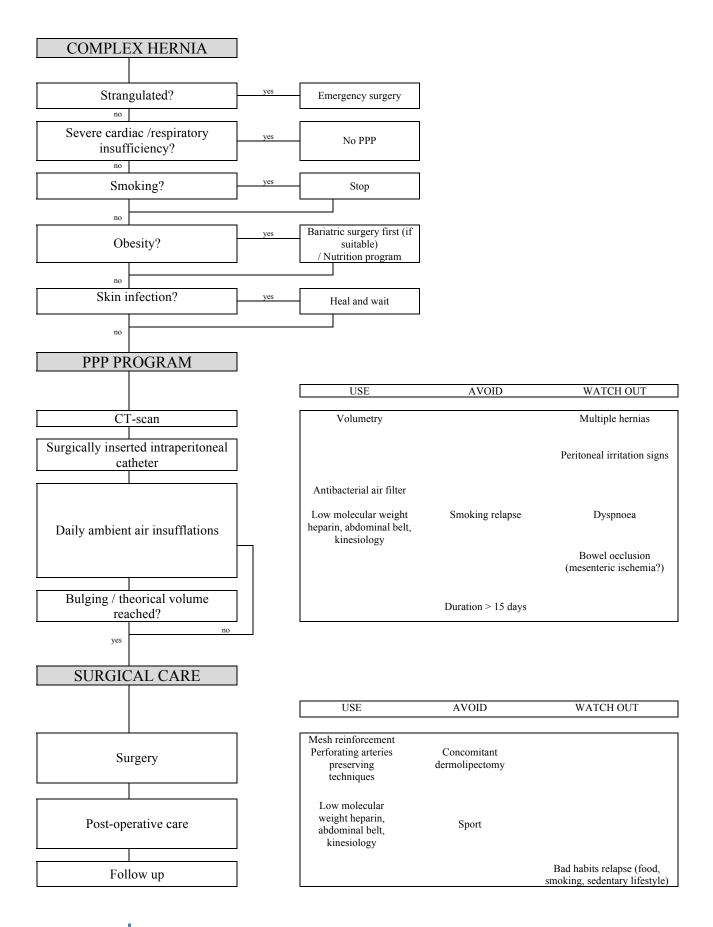
DATE	NAME	PATIENTS	HERNIA		A	PPP		POSTOPERATIVE	programme.
			VH	IH	LOD	Morbidity	Mortality	COMPLICATIONS	RECCURENCE
2014	Oprea	17	14	3	5	0	1 urinary sepsis > multi visceral failure (6%)		0
2013	Lopez Sanclemente	11	8	3	8	2 decompensate COPD 2 subcutaneous emphysema (36%)	0	10 seroma 4 VAC therapy	1
2012	Sabbagh	26 > 19	17	2	2	5 subcutaneous emphysema 2 acute respiratory distress 1 acute kidney injury 1 deep venous thrombosis 1 anaphylactic shock (47%)	1 mesenteric infarction 1 infected COPD (10%)	2 abdominal compartment syndrome (1 with mesenteric infarction) 1 full thickness necrosis 2 abscess (37%)	
2010	Tanaka	23					1 acute myocardial infarction (4%)	6 wound infections (26%)	1
2010	Bilians'kyi	25							
2010	Piskin	2		2					
2009	Meadory	9>7	6	1		1 deep venous thrombosis 1 acute kidney injury 1 infected catheter 1 twisted catheter	1 aspergillosis	1 ventral tachycardia	1
2009	Minossi	6	5	1			1 pneumonia	1 wound infection	0
2006	Rodriguez Ortega	4				0			0
2006	Mayagoitia	12 > 10	9	1	10	2 subcutaneous emphysema (20%)		2 wound infection (20%)	
2002	Toniato	77	66	0		1 acute respiratory distress 1 intraperitoneal catheter migration 1 significant bleeding around catheter (4%)	0	6 wound infection (8%)	2
2000	Willis	11 > 10	5	4	10	1 stop because of pain 1 catheter infection 7 subcutaneous emphysema (1 infected COPD	0
1994	Murr	27	17			3 subcutaneous emphysema (11%)	0	1 pulmonary embolism 1 hematoma (7%)	
1993	Coehlo	36				1 intracolonic insufflation 1 acute respiratory distress 4 subcutaneous emphysema (17%)		3 wound infections (8%)	3
1992 1990	Masi Volpato	3 2	3	2					
1990	Luder	11							
1990	Caldironi	40							2
1986	Rieu	4							
1985	Louis	42							
1985	Raynor	8							3
1978	Swelstad	5							
1972	Johnson	10							
1969 1968	Connolly Pingree	3 21				1 subcutaneous emphysema			
1954	Koontz	8			4				1

VH: ventral hernia; IH: inguinal hernia; LOD: loss of domain; COPD: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Annex 2: Patients flow chart



Annex 3: algorithm



CONCLUSION

THESE SOUTENUE PAR: Nicolas MOUGIN

<u>Titre:</u> Le pneumopéritoine progressif préopératoire (selon Goni Moreno) est-il sûr ? Etude rétrospective sur 152 patients pour évaluer sa morbi-mortalité spécifique.

Objectif: Evaluer la morbi-mortalité spécifique du pneumopéritoine progressif préopératoire (PPP) dans la prise en charge des éventrations larges de l'abdomen.

Patients et méthodes:

Etude monocentrique, constituée d'une cohorte rétrospective de 152 patients, traités entre Octobre 1974 et Février 2014.

Le critère principal est le taux de complications induites par le PPP. Les objectifs secondaires concernent les résultats des techniques chirurgicales (taux de complications postopératoires, taux de récidive).

Résultats:

Le taux de complications spécifiques au PPP est de 20% : 15% de complications mineures, 5% de complications majeures. Le taux de mortalité est inférieur à 1%.

La cure chirurgicale a été réalisée dans 98,6% des cas (91% avec une prothèse de renfort pariétal). Le taux de complications postopératoires est de 40% (mineures 20%, majeures 16%); le taux de mortalité est inférieur à 3%. La durée médiane d'hospitalisation est de 30 jours. Le taux de récidive est de 15% (suivi médian de 12 mois).

Conclusions:

Le PPP n'est pas dénué de risques, les 5% de complications majeures incitent à ne pas l'utiliser en ambulatoire. L'utilisation d'un cathéter intrapéritonéal placé chirurgicalement, sans dépasser 2 semaines d'insufflations, pourrait permettre de baisser sa morbi-mortalité spécifique.

Une prise en charge multidisciplinaire péri-opératoire (nutrition, chirurgie bariatrique) et l'emploi de nouveaux procédés chirurgicaux (préservation des artères perforantes, prothèses biologiques) pourraient améliorer les résultats chirurgicaux.

VU ET PERMIS D'IMPRIMER

Grenoble, le 26/08/2015

LE DOYEN

I DOMANIET

LE PRESIDENT DE THESE

PROFESSEUR C. LETOUBLON

29

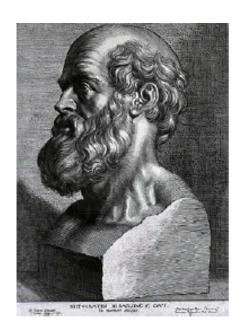
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SERMENT D'HIPPOCRATE

En présence des Maîtres de cette Faculté, de mes chers condisciples et devant l'effigie d'HIPPOCRATE,

Je promets et je jure d'être fidèle aux lois de l'honneur et de la probité dans l'exercice de la Médecine.

Je donnerais mes soins gratuitement à l'indigent et n'exigerai jamais un salaire au dessus de mon travail. Je ne participerai à aucun partage clandestin d'honoraires.

Admis dans l'intimité des maisons, mes yeux n'y verront pas ce qui s'y passe ; ma langue taira les secrets qui me seront confiés et mon état ne servira pas à corrompre les mœurs, ni à favoriser le crime.

Je ne permettrai pas que des considérations de religion, de nation, de race, de parti ou de classe sociale viennent s'interposer entre mon devoir et mon patient.

Je garderai le respect absolu de la vie humaine.

Même sous la menace, je n'admettrai pas de faire usage de mes connaissances médicales contre les lois de l'humanité.

Respectueux et reconnaissant envers mes Maîtres, je rendrai à leurs enfants l'instruction que j'ai reçue de leurs pères.

Que les hommes m'accordent leur estime si je suis fidèle à mes promesses.

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