Techniques Useful in Complex Microvascular Anastomosis

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INTRODUCTION

A microvascular anastomosis is demonstrated in this video as an approach for reconstructive surgery of the head and neck. This series of sutures has the potential to offer many advantages in situations such as those where there is limited available working space, weak vessels (for example, vessels that have been irradiated or that have atherosclerotic plaques) or suturing in tension or with small vessels (less than 0.8 cm in diameter). A link to the video relating to this article can be found at: https://doi.org/10.24983/scitemed.imj.2021.00151

ARTERIAL ANASTOMOSIS

During the video, arterial anastomosis was initiated using back-wall suturing without the use of vascular double-clamps (Figure 1A-B). There has been only one vascular single clamp used to control arterial blood flow far from the work area. It allows intimal compression to be performed in relatively healthy regions of poor-quality or under-tension vessels, thus minimising endothelial damage as well as avoiding vessel turnover and stretching of the endothelium. Following that, the stitches were performed in a regular fashion on the lateral walls (Figure 1C-D). A running suture was placed in the

Figure 1. (A, B) Arterial microvascular anastomosis using a back wall technique. (C, D) Arterial microvascular anastomosis with regular single stitches situated on the lateral wall. (E, F) The arterial microvascular anastomosis is performed with three to four loops of the running anterior wall technique. (G, H) A microvascular anastomosis of the arteries has been achieved. (I, J) A three-pin venous microvascular anastomosis using a triangular technique. (K, L) A venous microvascular anastomosis, which has been implanted with six pins on one side.
anterior portion of the lumen in order to provide adequate visual control (Figure 1E-F). As of this point (Figure 1G-H), the arterial single vascular clamp remained in place.

VENOUS ANASTOMOSIS

Anastomosis among the vessels was then performed based on a triangulation technique, with a coupler device utilized for vessels with a diameter ranging between 0.8 and 4.0 mm (Figure 1I-J). This particular technique allows for a higher level of venous stabilization when compared to a manual suturing method without vascular double-clamps. It was of the utmost importance that we attached the vessel endothelium onto the device (and not just the media). There should be no valves located near the venous anastomosis. It was at this point that the single arterial clamp was released (Figure 1K-L) to enable the veins to be sutured together. The dark venous blood flow from the flap and its quality can be observed in this manner prior to the device being closed on itself and reinforced with a mosquito forceps. Consequently, there was no need to conduct a venous milking patency test. Vein anastomoses should be placed on top of arterial anastomoses to prevent vascular compression.

CONSIDERATIONS

From the author’s perspective, a back-wall suture technique with the use of a single clamp may lead to a satisfactory outcome for vessels under 0.8 mm in diameter or in lymphaticovenular anastomosis. A caution should be taken to avoid using a double vascular clamp during arterial suture: in the case of right-handed surgeons, the right arterial vessel can prove difficult to control, so the single clamp should be left in place as a temporary ballast.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

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