

DOI: 10.5152/TurkThoracJ.2019.72

[Abstract:0242] MS-104 [Accepted: Oral Presentation] [Thoracic Surgery]

Transsternal Transpericardial Approach in Thoracic Surgery; Evaluation of 9 Cases

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Objectives: The transsternal transpericardial approach defined for post-pneumonectomic bronchopleural fistula closure. This technique provides a good exposure for pathologies of lower part of trachea, carina and visceral mediastinum. Nine cases has been operated via this approach in our clinic and results were evaluated.

Methods: Between 2014 and 2018, 9 cases who underwent transsternal transpericardial surgery were retrospectively reviewed. Patients were evaluated in terms of age, gender, symptom, cause and type of operation, postoperative complications, and postoperative intervention.

Results: Mean age was 38,3 years (range:3-66). Of 9 patients, 3 were female and 6 were male. Dyspnea was presenting symptom in 6 patients and cough in 3 patients. Fistula closure was performed in 4 of 9 patients because of bronchopleural fistula (BPF), 2 patients underwent trachea resection and end-to-end anastomosis, 1 carina resection and mediastinal mass excision was performed in 2 patients. Postoperative 1 patient had sternal dehiscence and 1 patient had pleural effusion, pericardial effusion and right upper lobe atelectasis. As of January 2019, all patients survived.

Conclusion: Transternal transpericardial approach can be used effectively and safely in thoracic surgery. The results are satisfactory. Appropriate technique is important for surgical success as well as patient selection.

Keywords: Trachea, bronchopleural fistula, transternal transpericardial procedure