Natural orifice transluminal endoscopic mediastinal surgery: NOTEMS, a promising field for endotherapy

The mediastinum used to be a forbidden area for endotherapy because of its complicated and variable anatomical structure [1]. Traditional surgery is regarded as curative but brings with it great trauma, a long recovery, high costs, and a poor quality of life [2]. To overcome these disadvantages, in our previous work we reported a novel approach to paraesophageal structures using the narrow submucosal tunnel or “third space” as an operating entry into the mediastinal cavity [3]. However, we still encountered several problems. When tumors are located higher than 22 cm from the incisors, it is impossible to start the tunnel entry 5 cm above the tumor site. In addition, when the tumor is larger than 5 cm in diameter, it cannot be taken out through the tunnel en bloc without injuring the mucosa, but has to be removed piecemeal instead. We are eager to update endoscopic procedures to improve the approach to such tumors.

Herein, we report on a novel technique, called natural orifice transluminal endoscopic mediastinal surgery (NOTEMS), which involves full-thickness resection of the esophageal wall to dissect the tumor in the mediastinal cavity, followed by closure of the wound by metallic clips along with biological glue, to treat large mediastinal tumors around the upper esophagus (Fig. 1). Using NOTEMS, we successfully treated a 30-year-old patient admitted because of an esophageal submucosal tumor (SMT) found on routine check-up by regular esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD) (Fig. 2). By means of computed tomography of the chest and endoscopic ultrasonography the SMT was diagnosed as a giant posterosuperior...
mediastinal tumor, and the patient very much wanted it removed (Video 1). Pathologic analysis showed a mixture of neurofibroma and schwannoma. The patient presented with rebound hyperthermia on postoperative day (POD) 1, which was relieved by intravenous antibiotics given for 4 days. On POD6 endoscopic examination showed metallic clips in place and wound healing with glue on top (Fig. 3), and on POD7 the patient was discharged. Routine follow-up EGD confirmed good healing.

**Fig. 2** NOTEMS for the treatment of a benign mediastinal tumor in a 30-year-old young man. The procedure included five steps as follows: a visualization of a giant tumor 21–26 cm from the incisors; b mucosal incision; c full-thickness resection of the esophageal wall; d extension of the incision along the vertical diameter of the tumor to ensure the tumor could be removed smoothly; e dissection of the surrounding tissue; f tumor dissection and extraction using a snare; g careful inspection of the wound cavity for any evidence of bleeding sites; h,i closure of the mucosal incision by placing of several metallic clips and spraying biological glue.

### Funding

- National Natural Science Foundation of China
  - http://dx.doi.org/10.13039/50110000180981902394
- National Natural Science Foundation of China
  - http://dx.doi.org/10.13039/50110000180982000623
- National Natural Science Foundation of China
  - http://dx.doi.org/10.13039/50110000180982003074
Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

The authors

Ping-ting Gao*, Sheng-li Lin*, Pei-yao Fu, Xin-yang Liu, Quan-lin Li, Wei-feng Chen, Ping-hong Zhou
Endoscopy Center and Endoscopy Research Institute, Zhongshan Hospital, Fudan University, Shanghai, China

* Ping-ting Gao and Sheng-li Lin contributed equally to this work.

Video 1 Natural orifice transluminal endoscopic mediastinal surgery (NOTEMS) for the treatment of a benign mediastinal tumor in a 30-year-old young man.

Fig. 3 On postoperative day 6, endoscopic examination showed metallic clips in place and wound healing with glue on top.

References


Bibliography

Endoscopy
DOI 10.1055/a-1540-5732
ISSN 0013-726X
published online 2021
© 2021. Thieme. All rights reserved.
Georg Thieme Verlag KG, Rüdigerstraße 14, 70469 Stuttgart, Germany

ENDOSCOPY E-VIDEOS
https://eref.thieme.de/e-videos

Endoscopy E-Videos is a free access online section, reporting on interesting cases and new techniques in gastroenterological endoscopy. All papers include a high quality video and all contributions are freely accessible online.

This section has its own submission website at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/e-videos

Gao Ping-ting et al. Natural orifice transluminal... Endoscopy | © 2021. Thieme. All rights reserved.