Development of an Algorithm for Prevention of Dermatome-Induced Lacerations: Incidence, Management, and Preventive Measures

Presenter: Francesco M. Egro, MD, MSc, MRCS

Co-Authors: Ololade T. Saliu, BS; Alain C. Corcos, MD, FACS; Jenny A. Ziembicki, MD, FACS

Affiliation: University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh, PA

INTRODUCTION: Dermatome-induced laceration is a known complication but there is a paucity of literature discussing the incidence or the predisposing factors. The aim of this study was to determine the incidence rate and identify those risk factors in order to develop an algorithm for residents to improve patient safety.

METHODS: An 18-question survey was sent to all Burn Unit Directors in the US and Canada investigating the type and location of practice, average annual caseload of skin graft harvesting, number of dermatome-induced lacerations, donor site location, harvesting technique and equipment, severity of laceration, etiology and patient related factors.

RESULTS: A total of 56 responses (42% response rate) were received from Burn Unit Directors in the US and Canada. A total of 133 lacerations were reported for the prior 5 years. The overall incidence of dermatome-induced lacerations was calculated at 0.1% per year (1.3 per 1,000 cases). The most common causes were excessive pressure with the dermatome (25.7%) and patient-related factors (18.9%) such as skin laxity (23%) and age (17.6%). Most lacerations occurred when the skin graft were harvested from the thigh (77%) with assistance of mineral oil (75.7%) as a lubricant, and by using a Zimmer air dermatome (73%) with a 4 inches guard (63.5%), 0.010–0.015 inches thickness (78.4%), and 30–45 degrees angulation (47.3%).

CONCLUSION: According to this study, dermatome-induced lacerations are rare events. However, every step should be taken to prevent them starting from proper identification of patients at risk, proper set up and use of the dermatome.

Study of Venous Congestion after Partial Limb Amputation in Rats: Protective Effects of Tirofiban or Heparin in Secondary Ischemia

Presenter: Jose Carlos Faes da Silva, MD, PhD

Affiliation: Sao Paulo University, Sao Paulo

Venous thrombosis is the main complication of vascular microsurgery an early intervention is mandatory to rescue the flap, with a success rate of only 50% after surgical revision; microcirculation thrombosis, oxygen free radicals production and edema are the main elements of ischemia/reperfusion (I/R) injury, and protective therapies aim to mitigate these changes. Antiplatelets and anticoagulants are used in different organs to control this injury. In this study, in a partial hind limb amputation model submitted to global ischemia, it was tested the protective effect of Heparin or Tirofiban during secondary ischemia after venous congestion. Sixty rats divided in three groups of 20 animals each were operated; after global ischemia of 90 minutes each group was injected into the contra lateral femoral vein, one of the following solutions: 1 ml of saline solution NaCl 0,9% - control group (CG); 1ml of Heparin 200 UI/kg - experimental group 1 (G1); 1ml of Tirofiban 50 μg /ml - experimental group 2 (G2). Sixty minutes of limb reperfusion was performed, and a secondary period of limb ischemia started with the clamping of the femoral vein only (limb congestion) which lasted for 90 minutes (secondary ischemia). After that, the vein clamp was removed and a 60-minute reperfusion period was observed; at the end of the second reperfusion period, the right gastrocnemius muscle was removed and fixed in 10% formaldehyde, animals were euthanized with a lethal dose of Pentobarbital. Muscle fibers were scored as uninjured or injured based on the morphology of individual fibers; interstitial edema and bleeding were graded on a four-point scale. The control group had more damaged muscle cells 54.6 ± 10.6% when compared to heparin 24.7 ± 11.7% and tirofiban 24.6 ± 8.6, all reached statistical significance (p<0.001); These comparisons were analysed using ANOVA and post-hoc Tukey. The single use of Heparin or Tirofiban showed a protective effect on venous congestion after global ischemia. When evaluating the edema,