Comparison of methods for closure of appendix stump during laparoscopic appendectomy using endoloops: Single surgeon experience

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: In this study, using single or double endoloops, with reference to the literature, we aimed to retrospectively assess the results for patients in our clinic who underwent a laparoscopic appendectomy.

METHODS: This study included 251 patients who were operated on by a single surgeon; 137 of the patients were male (54.6%) and 114 were female (45.4%). Patients were divided into two groups based on the type of endoloop procedure that was used. Group I included 107 patients for whom a single endoloop was used. Group II included 144 patients for whom double endoloop was used. Age, sex, duration of operation, length of hospital stay, pathological findings, perioperative appendix findings, perioperative abdominal findings, post-operative complications requiring hospitalization and wound infections were assessed for each patient. Patients were also assessed statistically for complications.

RESULTS: There were no significant differences in the demographic characteristics, perioperative surgery findings, pathological findings or duration of hospital stays between the two groups of the patients. However, the duration of operation was shorter in Group I (54.9±16.1 min) as compared to Group II (61.2±18.8 min). The incidence of complications requiring rehospitalization was statistically significantly lower in Group I (1.9%; n=2) as compared to Group II (9%; n=13) (p=0.018). There were no complications requiring re-operation for patients in Group I. In Group II, four patients (2.8%) required re-operation; however, this difference was not statistically significant. Concerning wound infection, there was also no significant difference between Group I (7.5% n=8) and Group II (4.9% n=7).

CONCLUSION: Using a double endoloop does not decrease the risk of post-operative complications, but it does increase the cost and the duration of the operation. We have concluded that using a single endoloop in a laparoscopic appendectomy may be more appropriate.

Keywords: Appendix; closure of stump; endoloop; laparoscopic appendectomy.

INTRODUCTION

Acute appendicitis is the most prevalent acute abdominal disease and the gold standard of treatment is surgical excision. The laparoscopic appendectomy method was first published in the literature by Semm in 1983. In addition to open and laparoscopic surgical methods, single-incision laparoscopic surgery (SILS) and natural orifice transluminal endoscopic appendectomy (NOTES) methods were also described for surgical treatment of acute appendicitis. Closure of the appendix stump is the most controversial area in the surgical technique because most appendectomy complications are the result of stump leakage. Various methods, such as endostaplers, pre-assembled endoloops or intracorporeal knots, endoclips and Hem-o-lok, were described for laparoscopic appendectomy procedures and are still currently in use. In this series, a double endoloop was used for some patients and a single endoloop was used for others.
However, publications comparing the double endoloop or intracorporeal knot method with a single endoloop or intracorporeal knot method are scarce. In our study, we aimed to retrospectively assess the results for the patients in our clinic who underwent a laparoscopic appendectomy using a single or double endoloop, with reference to the literature.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

After obtaining the approval of the local ethics committee, patient charts and computer data were retrospectively assessed. Patients whose operations started laparoscopically but then switched to open surgery and patients in whom endoloop was not used due to cecal necrosis, were excluded from this study. The final series included 251 patients (137 male and 114 female) who had undergone a laparoscopic appendectomy, performed by single-surgeon (general surgeon, Y. Ç.) between July 2014 and July 2018. Endoloop was used in each of these patients, regardless of the perioperative appendix findings (phlegmonous, perforated).

Patients were assessed in concerning age, sex, duration of operation, length of hospital stay, pathological findings, perioperative appendix findings, perioperative abdominal findings, post-operative complications requiring hospitalization and wound infections. They were then divided into two groups according to the use of single or double endoloop techniques. Group I consisted of 107 patients for whom a single endoloop ligature was used. Group II consisted of 144 patients for whom a double endoloop ligature was used.

Demographic characteristics, perioperative surgical findings, pathological findings, post-operative findings and complications were statistically compared between the two groups and assessed with reference to the literature.

Surgery

Pre-operative prophylactic cephazolin sodium 1 g was administrated to the patients intravenously. Under general anesthesia, pneumoperitoneum was created by inserting a veres needle through the infraumbilical incision, thus enabling the 10 mm trocar to enter the abdomen. Two 5 mm trocars were inserted in the left lower quadrant and suprapubically, under direct vision. The abdomen was explored with a 10 mm and 30 mm optic and the meso-appendix was separated using LigaSure (Medtronic). For patients in Group II, after the radix of the appendix became visible, the endoloop (Medtronic 0 vicryl) was ligated in a double endoloop, with 3–5 mm space between the ligatures. For patients in Group I, no additional procedure was carried out. The distal end was dissected by closing with the assistance of a dissector (Fig. 1). Optic 5 mm was switched with 18 cm and the appendix was removed through the 10 mm umbilical trocar or with the assistance of an endobag. If present, intraabdominal fluid or pus was aspirated and then a drain was inserted. For patients with perforation, antimicrobial therapy was administered during the hospital stay and continued until 10 days after discharge. Antimicrobial therapy was not sustained after prophylactic therapy in non-perforated patients.

Statistical Methods

Statistical analysis was conducted using the SPSS version 17.0 program. The conformance of the variables to normal distribution was controlled using histogram graphics and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Mean, standard deviation, median and minimum-maximum values were used for descriptive analysis. The results were compared in 2x2 cells using Pearson Chi-Square and Fisher’s Exact Test. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to assess variables without normal distribution (non-parametric) between groups. Results with a p-value <0.05 were considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

The 251 patients in the series included 137 male (54.6%) and 114 female (45.4%) patients. The single endoloop technique was used in the 107 patients assigned to Group I. The double endoloop technique was used for the remaining 144 patients, who were assigned to Group II. The mean age of the patients was 32.2±11.3 years. A comparison of patient age, and duration of operation and hospital stay between the two groups found that the duration of operation was longer in Group II (61.2±18.8 min) compared to Group I (54.9±16.1 min) (p=0.001), but there was no statistically significant difference concerning patient age and length of hospital stay (p>0.05).

When pathological findings were compared for patients in each group, the incidence of acute/phlegmonous appendicitis (62.6%) was found to be higher in patients in Group I than in Group II (49.3%) (p=0.004) (Table 1).

No significant difference was found in a comparison of perioperative appendix findings (p>0.05) (Table 1), pre-operative abdominal findings or drain use (p>0.05) for patients in Group I and Group II.
The incidence of wound infections or complications requiring rehospitalization or re-operation were compared. Patients in Group II required rehospitalization at a significantly higher rate (9%) than patients in Group I (1.9%) \(p=0.018\). There were no differences in the rate of wound infection and in the number of patients requiring re-operation between the groups \(p>0.05\) (Table 1).

In patients requiring rehospitalization, the perforated appendicitis rate (30.8%) as a perioperative appendix sign was higher than in patients that did not require rehospitalization (17.6%). The incidence of gangrene for patients requiring rehospitalization (15.4%) was also higher than in patients that did not require rehospitalization (2.3%). In patients requiring rehospitalization, the incidence of normal/phlegmonous

| Pathological findings of the patients | Group I (Single endo-loop) | Group II (Double-endoloop) | p  |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----|
| Appendicitis/phlegmonous            | 67                        | 71                        | 0.004 |
| Perforated                          | 0                         | 3                         |   |
| Appendix obliterans                 | 3                         | 6                         |   |
| Phlegmonous + lymphoid hyperplasia  | 31                        | 41                        |   |
| Pathology result non-available      | 3                         | 23                        |   |
| Neuroendocrine tumour               | 2                         | 0                         |   |
| Phlegmonous + lymphoid hyperplasia  | 1                         | 0                         |   |

| Table 1. Pathological findings. perioperative appendix findings, perioperative appendix findings and incidence of the complications |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group I (Single endo-loop) | Group II (Double-endoloop) | p  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|----|
| Pathological findings of the patients |               |    |
| Appendicitis/phlegmonous        | 67                        | 71                        | 0.004 |
| Perforated                      | 0                         | 3                         |   |
| Appendix obliterans             | 3                         | 6                         |   |
| Phlegmonous + lymphoid hyperplasia | 31                        | 41                        |   |
| Pathology result non-available  | 3                         | 23                        |   |
| Neuroendocrine tumour           | 2                         | 0                         |   |
| Phlegmonous + lymphoid hyperplasia | 1                         | 0                         |   |

| Perioperative appendix findings  |
|----------------------------------|
| Normal                           | 0                          | 1                          |
| Phlegmonous acute app            | 80                         | 111                        |
| Gangrene                         | 8                          | 5                          |
| Perforated                       | 19                         | 26                         |

| Perioperative appendix findings of the patients and drain use |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Normal abdominal                                              |
| Normal             | 83                        | 110                       |
| Reaction fluid     | 8                         | 17                        |
| Local pus/abscess  | 11                        | 14                        |
| Widespread pus/abscess | 5                        | 3                         |
| Drain              | 26                        | 31                        |

| Incidence of complications requiring rehospitalization, requiring re-operation and wound infection |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Re-hospitalization                                |                     |                              |
| No                                                | 105                    | 131                        |
| Yes                                               | 2                      | 13                         |

| Complication                                      |
| Subileus                                         | 2                      | 7                          |
| Abdominal pain monitorization                     | 0                      | 2                          |
| Stump leakage                                     | 0                      | 1                          |
| Trocar site hernia                                | 0                      | 1                          |
| Intraabdominal abscess                            | 0                      | 2                          |

| Requiring re-operation                            |
| 0                                                | 0                      | 4                          |

| Wound infection                                   |
| 8                                                | 7.5                     | 7                          |

| Ulus Travma Acil Cerrahi Derg. November 2019, Vol. 25, No. 6 |

618
acute appendicitis (53.8%) as a perioperative appendix sign was lower than in patients that did not require rehospitalization (80.2%) \((p=0.018)\).

In patients requiring re-operation, the perforated appendicitis rate (25%) was higher than in patients that did not require re-operation (18.6%). In patients requiring re-operation, the incidence of gangrene was higher (25%) when compared to patients that did not require re-operation (2.9%). In patients requiring re-operation, the rate of normal/phlegmonous acute appendicitis (50%) was lower than in patients that did not require re-operation (78.6%) \((p=0.050)\).

In Group I, 2 patients requiring rehospitalization had subileus as a complication. In Group II, 13 patients requiring rehospitalization had the following complications: subileus \((n=7)\), abdominal pain monitorization \((n=2)\), stump leakage \((n=1)\), trocar site hernia \((n=1)\) and intraabdominal abscess \((n=2)\). In Group II, four patients requiring re-operation, the complications were as follows: stump leakage \((n=1)\), trocar site hernia \((n=1)\) and intraabdominal abscess \((n=2)\). Two patients diagnosed with intraabdominal abscess required open drainage. Incisional hernia surgery was performed on a patient with a trocar site hernia diagnosis. Another patient required re-operation to re-close the appendix stump after a diagnosis of stump leakage. After draining and cleaning the abdomen, a preventive ileostomy was carried out and, three months later, the ileostomy was closed.

**DISCUSSION**

There were no significant differences between the two groups in our series concerning demographic characteristics, pathological findings, perioperative appendix findings and duration of hospital stay.

In the study by Rakić et al.\(^{[13]}\) a comparison of the single proximal endoloop and endostapler techniques found that there were no differences between the two groups concerning perioperative or post-operative complications. The duration of operation, however, was shorter in endoloop patients. In their study comparing single proximal endoloop and Hem-o-lock clips, Lucchi et al.\(^{[12]}\) found that patients in both groups experienced a similar length of hospital stay and the rate of infectious complications. Bali et al.\(^{[16]}\) compared the use of double intracorporeal knots and endoloops and found that the duration of operation was higher when the intracorporeal knot was used, but there was no difference in the rate of complications. In the study by Rossem et al.\(^{[11]}\) comparing the use of double proximal endoloops and endostaplers, no significant difference was observed between the two groups about duration of operation and infectious complications. In the study by Swank et al.\(^{[15]}\) comparing the use of double or single endoloops with endostaplers, no significant difference was found in the rate of post-operative infectious complications. The results reported by other authors are summarized in Table 2.

| Table 2. Duration of operation and complication incidence in studies comparing methods for closure of appendix stump |
| --- |
| **Used methods and number** | **Duration of operation (min)** | **Complication rate (%)** | **Group I** | **Group II** | **p** | **Group I** | **Group II** | **p** |
| Beldi et al.\(^{[7]}\) | Single endoloop | 109 | Double-endoloop | 99 | 55 | 4.6% | 5.1% | >0.05 |
| Safavi et al.\(^{[14]}\) | Endoclips | 38 | Endoloop (number non-specified) | 38 | 21.5 | 23.2 | 0.021 | 4.6% | 0% | 0.614 |
| Swank et al.\(^{[15]}\) | Endostapler | 571 | Single or double endoloop | 465 | 40.5 | 58 | 0.237 | 4.3% | 4.3% | 0.699 |
| Rossem et al.\(^{[11]}\) | Double-endoloop | 1050 | Endostapler | 318 | 40 | 40 | 0.185 | 5% | 3.8% | 0.032 |
| Bali et al.\(^{[16]}\) | Double intracorporeal knot | 65 | Endoloop (number non-specified) | 61 | 55 | 55 | 0.01 | 0% | 0% | 0.014 |
| Lucchi et al.\(^{[12]}\) | Single endoloop | 121 | Hem-o-log | 138 | 40 | 40.5 | 36.4 | 0.032 | 1.4% | 1.4% | 0.014 |
| Rakić et al.\(^{[13]}\) | Double-endoloop | 229 | Single Endoloop | 55 | 18 | 40 | 0.01 | 1.4% | 1.4% | 0.014 |

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Çelik et al. Comparison of methods for closure of appendix stump during laparoscopic appendectomy using endoloops
In a study of 208 patients by Beldi et al., a single endoloop was used in 109 patients, while double endoloop was used in the remaining 99 patients. Post-operative complications occurred in five patients (4.6%) in the single endoloop group and in five patients (5.1%) in the double endoloop group. Although the rate of complication was lower in the single endoloop group, the difference was not statistically significant. Repeat studies over a larger series were suggested. In our series, the rate of complications requiring rehospitalization was significantly lower in Group I (n=2, 1.9%) compared to Group II (n=13, 9%). There were no complications requiring re-operation in Group I, but four patients in Group II experienced complications requiring re-operation (two patients had intraabdominal abscesses, one patient had stump leakage and one patient had an incisional hernia). The difference between the two groups, however, was not significant.

In the study by Rossem et al., necrosis or perforation of the appendix was considered complicated appendicitis. Complicated appendicitis was found to be a risk factor for the development of an intraabdominal abscess. In our series, there was no difference between the two groups about perioperative appendix findings. However, in the whole series, the rate of complicated appendicitis was higher in patients with complications due to surgery, as compared to patients without complications.

In our series, the mean duration of operation was shorter in Group I (54.9±16.1 min) compared to Group II (61.2±18.8 min). We think that the difference may be the result of additional time needed to insert the second loop.

In conclusion, endoloop use is as safe as other methods in laparoscopic appendectomy. Using a double endoloop does not decrease the rate of post-operative complications; however, it increases the cost and duration of the operation. Therefore, we have concluded that using a single endoloop in a laparoscopic appendectomy may be more appropriate.

Conflict of interest: None declared.

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Çelik et al. Comparison of methods for closure of appendix stump during laparoscopic appendectomy using endoloops

Laparoskopik apendektomilerde endoloop ile güdük kapama tekniği karşılaştırılması: Tek hekim deneyimi

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AMAÇ: Bu çalışmada kliniğimizde çift ya da tek endoloop kullanılan laparoskopik apendektomi yapılan hastalarımızın sonuçlarını literatür eğiliminde genel döndük olarak değerlendirmeyi amaçladık.

GEREÇ VE YÖNTEM: Çalışmaya 137 erkek (%54.6) ve 114 kadın (%45.4) olmak üzere tek cerrah tarafından ameliyat edilen toplam 251 hasta katıldı. Hastaların 107’si tek endoloop yönteminin kullananlığı grup I, 144’ü çift endoloop yönteminin kullananlığı grup II idi. Hastaların yaş cinsiyet, ameliyat süresi, hastanede yatma süresi, patoloji bulguları, perioperatif apendiks bulguları, perioperatif batın bulguları, ameliyat sonrası yatış gereken komplikasyonlar, ameliyat sonrası operasyon gereken komplikasyonlar ve yara yeri enfeksiyonuna bakıldı. Komplikasyonlar istatistiksel olarak incelendi.

BULGULAR: Her iki grup arasında demografik özellikleri, perioperatif ameliyat bulguları, patoloji bulguları, ameliyat sonrası bulgular ve hastanede yatış süresi araştırmada anlamlı fark izlenmedi. Ameliyat süreleri grup I’de (54.9±16.1) grup II’den (61.2±18.8) daha kısa bulundu. Tekrar yatış gereken komplikasyonlar grup I’de (%1.9; n=2) grup II’den (%9; n=13) anlamlı olarak az bulundu (p=0.018). Tekrar ameliyat gereken komplikasyon grup I’de oldu. Grup II’den dört hastada (%2.8) olduğu, istatistiksel olarak anlamlı fark bulunmadı. Yara yeri enfeksiyonu grup I (%7.5 n=8) ile grup II (%4.9 n=7) arasında anlamlı fark izlenmedi.

TARTIŞMA: Çift endoloop kullanmak ameliyat sonrası komplikasyonları azaltmakla birlikte ameliyat maliyetini artırmak ve ameliyat süresini uzatarak, laparoskopik apendektomide loop kullanımından tek loop kullanımın daha uygun olacağına kanaatindeyiz.

Anahtar sözcükler: Apendisit; endoloop; güdük kapama; laparoskopik apendektomi.

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