

Intrdocution

Incisional hernia is a hernia that occurs through the abdominal wall following penetrating wounds or abdominal operations (Maingot 1974). The majority of these are postoperative.

The history of incisional hernia will probably never be completely told, for many reasons not the least of which is that a hernia occurring in an abdominal surgical wound is, in a way, an admission of failure on the part of the surgeon to provide for optimal wound care.

Stanton in 1916 reported the occurrence of three incisional hernias in 216 clean laparotomies whereas 18 occurred in 186 infected laparotomy incisions.

With the evolution of modern surgery and the rapid increase in the number of abdominal operations performed, incisional hernias have risen in frequency. Incisional hernia constitutes the second most frequent type of hernias after inguinal hernias (Nuhus).

Also it occurs in approximately 2 or 3% of all patients subjected to abdominal operations, and in an outpatient department of any large general hospital it would account for about 7% of

patients with external abdominal hernias seeking treatment (Maingot 1974).

The occurrence of postoperative hernia is generally much higher than believed. This is because many of the patients do not return to the surgeon who has performed the original operation. Also because some patients are unaware of the presence of the hernia and others prefer to wear supports or girdles rather to submit themselves to another operation.

An incisional hernia does not improve spontaneously. The tendency is rather to increase in size, so the prospect of successful operative treatment becomes more remote.

Numerous operative methods have been tried to close these defects but none of them, up till now, can be considered ideal as recurrence can occur even with the most meticulous methods.

It is well known that the best chance is the first operation and that recurrence makes the possibilities of success less liable.