The importance of the time interval between diagnosis and operation in myasthenia gravis patients.


AIM: Complete remission rates in patients with myasthenia gravis (MG) using anticholine esterases, immunosuppressive drugs, and medical therapy methods like plasmapheresis are low. Because high levels of complete remission and advantages are reported after thymectomy this surgical method is widely used in patients with MG.

METHODS: The preoperative status and the responses to thymectomy have been studied in 15 patients who had been diagnosed as MG and underwent thymectomy in Ankara Numune Education and Research Hospital.

RESULTS: Patients who underwent thymectomy have shown a high proportion of clinical improvement (73%). We could not establish a direct relationship between the results and the patients’ age, sex features and the pathological characteristics of the excisional biopsy specimens. The benefit rates for patients who had a short period of time between diagnosis and operation (87.5%) were higher (91%).

CONCLUSIONS: Thymectomy because of its high benefit rate is an advantageous therapeutic tool. The chance of benefiting from thymectomy increases when the history of MG is short and the stage of the disease is early.

PMID: 12627084 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]