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Abbreviations: PostTS: Posttracheostomy Tracheal Stenosis; PostINT: Postintubation Tracheal Stenosis; T-E st: Tracheo-

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where its radical segmental resection is not feasible or performable. These are the three situations wherein the T-tube can be inserted, as:

- a temporary stent before segmental resection
- a temporary stent after segmental resection
- a single intervention—generally in all patients with long and multisegment stenoses, and also in those with severe comorbidity, where the radical segmental resection is not feasible. Standard indication criteria are shown in Table 1.

To complete this section, it has to be mentioned that, in general, tracheal stenosis can be managed in three different ways, including segmental tracheal resection, endoscopic stenting, recanalization by direct techniques (stenotic segment dilatation with discision/excision of stenotic granulated tissue surgically, or by laser evaporation).

As was already stated in the Introduction, the management of tracheal stenotic lesion always requires an individual approach considering not only the local (tracheal wall) but also the general condition of the suffering individual.

Results

In all kinds of trachea reconstruction, a relatively good toleration of silicone material was observed. The Silicone T-tube causes minimal complications. Obstructions of the T-tube by dense sputum, which required the T-tube removal and its replacing by a double-coated tracheotomy tube, were the most common complication. The location, where most complications occurred was the upper part of the T-tube, in the place from where it was inserted to subglottic area. Here, irritations and granulations could be sporadically observed. It is really difficult to estimate the correct length of the upper end of the T-tube's vertical branch. For this reason, it was necessary to perform endoscopic checks with the adjustment of the tube's upper end (due to the close position of vocal cords, and due to a necessity of granulations' overbridging). After inserting the T-tube's upper vertical part through vocal cords and its long-term positioning in this area, no significant changes of vocal cords were observed. After the removal of the tube, the patient's voice spontaneously appeared, even though it was not always clear.

In accordance with our standard indications criteria (Table 1), the following results were recorded:

- In 13 patients, the T-tube was used as a bridge to definitive reconstructive surgery. As it is illustrated by our case report, these are those patients with active coexisting medical conditions or severe deconditioning following their extended ICU stay and/or in acute injured trachea by previous interventions (tracheotomy, intubation etc.). From among these cases, 5 patients had posttracheostomy stenosis, 4 patients

had combined (posttracheostomy and postintubation stenosis) and 4 patients had benign tracheo-esophageal stulae. All of these patients already underwent successful segmental tracheal resection with end-to-end anastomosis and their T-tubes were definitively removed.

- In three cases, the stenting by T-tube was performed after the segmental resection as an adjunct to primary tracheal reconstruction. There were three young patients (2 males, 1 female) after car accidents. Their T-tubes were successfully removed after 6, 10, and 15 months, respectively.

- In this last group of patients (n=51), the insertion of T-tube was performed as a single procedure. Generally, in all of these patients their poor general condition prohibited a surgery or their tracheal lesion was not feasible for surgical repair due to the length and multisegmental character. The results were analyzed and already presented in detail elsewhere [16] and, therefore, herein only a brief analysis of these results is presented. In 32 patients, the T-tube was inserted for benign conditions; posttracheostomy and postintubation tracheal stenosis in 29 cases, and functional stenoses in 3 cases. In the rest of the cases (n=19), the T-tube was inserted as a palliative measure in malignant

tracheal stenoses. This group includes 2 patients with malignant tracheo-esophageal stulae and 17 cases with non-resectable malignant tumors, which caused tracheal stenosis. In the vast majority of these

