

**Thoracoscopic Left Splanchnicectomy – Role in Pain Control in Unresectable Pancreatic Cancer. Initial Experience**

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**Abstract**

*Background:* The management of opiate-dependent intractable abdominal pain caused by unresectable pancreatic cancer remains challenging. The aim of this study was to evaluate the safety and efficacy of thoracoscopic unilateral left splanchnicectomy for pain control in a first series of 15 patients with unresectable pancreatic cancer.

*Patients and Methods:* Fifteen patients suffering from intractable pain due to unresectable pancreatic cancer (stage III and IV) underwent thoracoscopic unilateral left splanchnicectomy. To assess pain severity and the impact of this palliative procedure for pain relief, all patients completed Wong-Baker Faces Pain Rating Scale with a preoperative pain degree between 7 and 9.

*Results:* Surgical intervention duration varied from 30 minutes to 1 hour. Pleural drainage tube was removed 24 hours post-operatively. There were no complications nor deaths. Immediate pain relief (pain degree 0–2) was achieved in all patients after thoracoscopic unilateral splanchnicectomy, same level being registered at first check-up after one month.

*Conclusions:* Thoracoscopic unilateral left splanchnicectomy decreases the pain substantially and significantly improves the quality of life in patients with unresectable pancreatic cancer.

**Key words:** cancer, pain, thoracoscopy, splanchnicectomy

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