



Tailoring our preoperative optimization and surgical strategy seems the key in managing the complex hernia patient

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In this special issue on complex ventral and incisional hernias different aspects related to both diagnosis and management will be highlighted. These defects present unique challenges in prehabilitation, optimization and surgical management due to their intricate nature and potential complications [1]. These hernias are termed “complex” due to factors such as large size, specific location, recurrent herniation, presence of infection or contamination and/or associated comorbidities.

In times of evidence based medicine it is however hardly impossible to set up randomized controlled trials to investigate what is the best technique for these challenging hernias as so many different parameters play a role. Consequently, we should learn from expertise by others, from their observational cohort studies and even retrospective analyses to be able to implement their findings in our own practice. In the meantime we need to be critical towards our own results and to improve our patients’ outcomes.

Besides preoperative optimization by e.g., botulinum toxin A injections and progressive pneumoperitoneum, different surgical techniques may help to address the complexity of the abdominal wall reconstruction [2, 3]. Different surgical techniques as the peritoneal flap technique and the use of component separation techniques have both been reported with excellent results, but the question remains what tool or technique or which combinations of those are most suitable for each patient [4–6]. Does it depend on patient or hernia characteristics only or does it have more to do with surgeon’s training and experience? In the end, our ultimate goal should lead to an integration of all these perioperative adjuncts into the best possible therapy for an individual patient. We should keep learning from worldwide experts that both engage in continuous research and have appropriate patient volumes to teach us how to handle these challenging defects.

In this special issue with invited papers by experts from all around the world, we will be able to continue to learn and to increase further discussion and debate on this exciting journey in abdominal wall reconstruction. Enjoy.

Data availability Not applicable.

Declarations

Conflict of interest, Ethical approval, Human and animal rights and Informed consent Not applicable.

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