

Difficult Decisions in Surgery:
An Evidence-Based Approach 1

Mark K. Ferguson *Editor*

Difficult Decisions in Thoracic Surgery

An Evidence-Based Approach

Third Edition

 Springer

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Mark K. Ferguson

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To Phyllis – I could not have hoped for a better partner on this journey.

Preface

I am pleased to offer readers Edition 3 of *Difficult Decisions in Thoracic Surgery*. The series was planned to include new editions every 3–4 years, and this volume follows on the heels of two successful prior editions. I am grateful for the positive feedback from many readers who use the information in these books to help guide their clinical practices and for the compliments from educators who found the data and discussions valuable for their trainees.

The format of this volume is similar to that of the past two editions. A table of contents was developed that focused on current areas of controversy in general thoracic surgery, and authors with recognized expertise were invited to examine evidence relevant to the controversies. Their charge was to develop best practice recommendations based on published evidence, and to also provide a statement as to their personal approaches to these challenging clinical topics. One change for this edition was that authors were asked to construct their reviews based on PICO (patient population, intervention, comparator group, and outcomes measured) formatting, helping to clarify the question for the author/reader and to direct the appropriate literature search and analysis.

The authors were asked to work within a very tight timetable to ensure that the content was as up-to-date as possible. In fact, the author list and table of contents were developed less than a year before the publication date of this volume. Creating a print publication that involves so many moving parts in such a short time frame speaks to the dedication of the authors and the publisher to the concept of evidence-based medicine. They recognize the need for timely and accurate information to inform practicing physicians. I am grateful for their invaluable contributions.

Overall, 35 of the 55 clinical chapters in this volume are new compared to Edition 2, and all of the remaining 20 chapters were written by new authors. When viewed collectively, the three editions comprise over 100 unique clinical topics authored by over 140 senior authors, which makes the series a great resource for surgeons and trainees.

The success of these editions has engendered a plan to publish similar volumes in a newly developed series titled “Difficult Decisions in Surgery”. The current volume is the first of the series. We hope to publish 3–4 volumes annually,

ultimately covering a dozen subspecialty areas in great general surgery. The volumes will be edited by recognized authorities in their fields and new editions of each volume will be published every 3–4 years with updated information and new clinical topics. This will result in an entire library of up-to-date information of immediate use to specialty surgeons around the world. I envision that the series will serve as a teaching aid, an invaluable clinical tool, and as a source of inspiration for clinical research.

As always, I am grateful to my colleagues nationally and internationally for their friendship and cooperation. I am indebted to our trainees, who continue to ask important questions that illustrate the wide gaps that exist in our clinical knowledge. The ongoing pursuit by these esteemed professionals of evidence fostering excellence is the inspiration for this work.

Chicago, IL, USA
May, 2014

Mark K. Ferguson, MD

Contents

1 Introduction	1
Mark K. Ferguson	
Part I Evaluations and Decisions	
2 Evidence Based Medicine: Quality of Evidence and Evaluation Systems.	17
Apoorva Krishna Chandar and Yngve Falck-Ytter	
3 Decision Analytic Techniques and Other Decision Processes	35
Varun Puri and Bryan F. Meyers	
4 Decision Making: The Surgeon’s Perspective	47
Thomas K. Varghese Jr.	
5 Decision Making: The Patient’s Perspective	59
Joshua A. Hemmerich and Kellie Van Voorhis	
Part II Lung	
6 Indications for Pretreatment Pathologic Mediastinal Staging in Non-small Cell Lung Cancer	75
Sai Yendamuri and Todd L. Demmy	
7 Preoperative Smoking Cessation for Lung Resection Patients	85
Alberto de Hoyos and Malcolm DeCamp	
8 High Tech Exercise Testing in Assessing Candidates for Lung Resection.	99
Alessandro Brunelli and Michele Salati	
9 Management of Perioperative Anticoagulation in Lung Resection.	109
Jacob R. Moremen and DuyKhanh P. Mimi Ceppa	

10 Perioperative Arrhythmia Prophylaxis for Major Lung Resection	125
Arielle Hodari and Zane Hammoud	
11 VATS Versus Open Lobectomy for Stage I or II NSCLC.	137
Kezhong Chen, Yun Li, and Jun Wang	
12 Robotic-Assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery (RATS) Versus Video-Assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery (VATS) Lobectomy for Stage I or II Non-small Cell Lung Cancer.	153
Eric Vallières and Peter Baik	
13 Lobectomy After Induction Therapy for NSCLC in the Presence of Persistent N2 Disease	165
Benedict D.T. Daly	
14 Pneumonectomy After Induction Therapy for Non-small Cell Lung Cancer	177
Benjamin E. Haithcock and Richard H. Feins	
15 Resection Versus SBRT for Stage I Non-small Cell Lung Cancer in Patients with Good Pulmonary Function.	187
Michael Lanuti	
16 Digital Drainage Systems After Major Lung Resection.	199
Gonzalo Varela	
17 Management of Persistent Post-operative Alveolar Air Leak	207
Anna L. McGuire and R. Sudhir Sundaresan	
18 Surveillance After Resection of Stage I Non Small Cell Lung Cancer	229
Nathan M. Mollberg	
19 Support Therapy for Lung Failure: The Utility of Device Therapy	239
Christopher Wigfield and Sadeesh Srinathan	
20 Extracorporeal Support for Lung Grafts Prior to Transplantation	251
Axel Haverich and Christian Kuehn	
21 Pulmonary Metastasectomy	257
Trevor Williams	
Part III Esophagus	
22 Optimal Therapy for Barrett High Grade Dysplasia	271
Gabriel D. Lang and Vani J.A. Konda	

23	Preoperative Chemo Versus Chemoradiotherapy for Regionally Advanced Esophageal Adenocarcinoma	287
	Basil S. Nasir and Moishe Liberman	
24	The Role of Surgery in the Management of Regionally Advanced Esophageal Squamous Cell Cancer	301
	Tyler R. Grenda and Andrew C. Chang	
25	Optimal Surgical Approach to Esophagectomy for Distal Esophageal Adenocarcinoma	311
	Sabha Ganai	
26	Regional Extent of Lymphadenectomy for Esophageal Cancer	325
	Hirofumi Kawakubo, Hiryoya Takeuchi, and Yuko Kitagawa	
27	Optimal Lymph Node Dissection in Esophageal Cancer	337
	Nasser K. Altorki and Brendon M. Stiles	
28	Salvage Esophagectomy for Persistent or Recurrent Disease After Definitive Chemoradiotherapy	351
	David Rice and Clara S. Fowler	
29	Gastric Emptying Procedure After Esophagectomy	365
	Puja Gaur and Scott James Swanson	
30	Postoperative Adjuvant Therapy After Resection of Regionally Advanced Esophageal Cancer	377
	Elizabeth Won and David H. Ilson	
31	Prophylactic Antireflux Surgery in Lung Transplantation	387
	Brian C. Gulack, Matthew G. Hartwig, and R. Duane Davis	
32	Surgical Versus Endoscopic Management for Esophageal Perforations	399
	Henner M. Schmidt and Donald E. Low	
33	Stents for Esophageal Anastomotic Leak	413
	Shanda H. Blackmon and Laurissa Gann	
34	Management of Small Esophageal GIST Tumors	423
	Richard G. Berrisford and Samuel J. Ford	
35	Surgery for Minimally Symptomatic Pulsion Diverticula of the Thoracic Esophagus	429
	Parise Paolo and Zaninotto Giovanni	
36	Partial Versus Total Fundoplication for GERD in Patients with Normal Esophageal Motility	435
	Marco E. Allaix and Marco G. Patti	

Part IV Diaphragm

- 37 Diaphragm Pacing** 449
Françoise Le Pimpec-Barthes
- 38 Minimally Invasive Versus Open Repair of Giant Paraesophageal Hernia** 461
Janet P. Edwards and Sean C. Grondin
- 39 Synthetic Reinforcement of Diaphragm Closure for Large Hiatal Hernia Repair** 473
Katie S. Nason
- 40 Diaphragmatic Plication for Eventration** 499
Eitan Podgaetz and Rafael S. Andrade
- 41 Management of Minimally Symptomatic Recurrent Hiatal Hernia** 511
Brant K. Oelschlager and Robert B. Yates

Part V Airway

- 42 Stenting for Benign Airway Obstruction** 531
Septimiu Murgu
- 43 Bioengineered Tissues for Tracheal Reconstruction** 565
Philipp Jungebluth and Paolo Macchiarini
- 44 Percutaneous Versus Standard Tracheostomy in the Critically Ill Adult** 577
Mara B. Antonoff and Varun Puri
- 45 Carinal Resection for Non Small Cell Lung Cancer** 589
Timothy M. Millington and Henning A. Gaissert

Part VI Pleura and Pleural Spaces

- 46 Management of Persistent Postoperative Air Leaks** 601
Robert E. Merritt
- 47 Fibrinolytics for Managing Pleural Empyema** 613
Nirmal K. Veeramachaneni and Casey P. Hertenzenberg
- 48 VATS Versus Open Management of Pleural Empyema** 623
Udo Abah, Felice Granato, and Marco Scarci
- 49 Optimal Management of Symptomatic Malignant Pleural Effusion** 635
Xiao Li and Mark K. Ferguson
- 50 Pleurectomy Versus Radical Pleuropneumonectomy for Malignant Pleural Mesothelioma** 647
Shamus R. Carr and Joseph S. Friedberg

51 Surgical and Medical Therapy for Malignant Pleural Mesothelioma 659
 Christopher Cao

Part VII Mediastinum

52 Extended Versus Standard Thymectomy for Myasthenia Gravis 677
 Paul E. Van Schil, Rudy Mercelis, and Marco Lucchi

53 Optimal Approach for Resection of Encapsulated Thymoma: Open Versus VATS 689
 Joshua Sonett and Peter Downey

54 Robotic Versus VATS Thymectomy for Encapsulated Thymoma ... 699
 Federico Rea and Giuseppe Marulli

55 Video Mediastinoscopy Versus Standard Mediastinoscopy 709
 David J. McCormack and Karen Harrison-Phipps

56 Debulking for Extensive Thymoma 717
 Panos Vardas and Thomas Birdas

57 Surgery for Palmar Hyperhidrosis: Patient Selection and Extent of Surgery 725
 Mario Santini and Alfonso Fiorelli

Part VIII Chest Wall

58 Synthetic Versus Biologic Reconstruction of Bony Chest Wall Defects 747
 Gaetano Rocco

59 Management of Flail Chest 755
 Tamas F. Molnar and Szilard Rendeki

60 Management of Pectus Deformities in Adults 767
 Marco Anile, Daniele Diso, Erino Angelo Rendina, and Federico Venuta

Index 775

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