obliteration had the highest risk of recurrence (58% in children and 20% in adults after 5 years). In children, CWU without obliteration was associated with a hazard ratio for recurrence of 1.9 (95% 1.2–3.0) when compared with CWU with obliteration.

Conclusion: The incidence rate of STMEC1 in children halved from 2002 to 2015. Compared with adults, children were at an increased risk of recurrence. In children treated with CWU, obliteration was associated with a significantly lower risk of recurrence compared with no obliteration.

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Cholesteatoma and the mastoid (N843)

ID: 843.3

Rationale for obliteration of the mastoid cavity

Presenting Author: **Michael Gaihede**

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Learning Objectives: Basic knowledge about the anatomy and function of the mastoid provides a rationale for obliteration of the cavity in cholesteatoma surgery.

"Danish Otology Society symposium"

Mastoidectomy is often included in cholesteatoma surgery in order to eradicate the disease. In such cases the subsequent reconstruction of the middle ear may include obliteration of the mastoid. This has become increasingly popular, because studies have demonstrated less recurrent cholesteatomas. While this may speak for itself, the basic reasons for obliteration have not been documented.

The rationale for mastoid obliteration should be based on its function in normal and diseased ears, but our understanding of the mastoid function is rather limited despite its unique structure compared with the tympanum. Thus, the mastoid has been regarded to have only a passive role, where it may enhance the area for gas exchange as well as be a pressure buffer by virtue of its volume.

Recent clinical physiological experiments have demonstrated how pressure regulation of the middle ear cleft consists of both stepwise pressure changes by Eustachian tube openings as well as gradual pressure changes explained by changes in the thickness or congestion of the mastoid mucosa. More studies have confirmed this idea, which may point to a role of the mastoid in the overall pressure regulation.

The histological structure of the mastoid mucosa favors such a function by a loose connective tissue and abundant blood vessels. However, the mucosa does not display cilia and goblet cells as found in the tympanum, which makes it more susceptible to inflammatory changes. Chronic or recurrent infections may easily cause a relative fibrosis, which inevitably limits its capability for thickness changes based on its congestion, whereas its capability for gas absorption may remain unaffected.

In this scenario, the mastoid mucosa may have lost its functional properties because of chronic or recurrent inflammations, and obliteration can eliminate the contribution of a diseased mucosa, which may contribute only to gas absorption and development of middle ear underpressure.

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Cholesteatoma and the mastoid (N843)

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Primary obliteration of the mastoid cavity in cholesteatoma surgery

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Learning Objectives: Handling of Canal wall up and Canal wall down mastoidal cavities in cholesteatoma surgery.

Danish Otology Society symposium

Mastoidectomy is often necessary in cholesteatoma surgery. If the posterior ear canal wall can be preserved, the mastoidal cavity remains in contact with the middle ear air space, even though it is often filled with scar tissue. The pressure-regulating role of the mastoid mucosa is presumably destroyed or severely diminished due to removal of the trabecular structure. Should the canal wall-up cavity be obliterated in order to prevent recurrence of a cholesteatoma? Or should it be left open allowing subsequent re-aeration? The latter includes a risk of renewed negative pressure in the middle ear and mastoid and the development of recurrent cholesteatoma.

If the posterior ear canal wall has to be removed producing a modified radical cavity, the ear canal is substantially enlarged. This implies regular cleaning (often by an ENT specialist), and moist and infections in the cavity can be troublesome. Should the cavity be obliterated in order to restore the ear canal to its normal size? Or should it be left open for optimal disease control? We have developed a strategy with partial obliteration and enlargement of the ear canal opening. Bone dust, cartilage, fascia and on rare occasions artificial material can be used for obliteration. We find that a partial obliteration diminishes the need for postoperative ear care.

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Endoscopic Ear Surgery 2 (R844)

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Beyond the middle ear

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The lateral skull base constitutes an anatomic boundary between the fields of neurosurgery and otolaryngology.