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Perspective

Optimizing Outcomes and Unveiling Novel Insights of Pediatric Epilepsy Surgery

Helene Beloeil*

Department of Surgery, Keio University School of Medicine, Tokyo, Japan

DESCRIPTION

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder characterized by recurrent seizures that affect millions of people worldwide. While medications are often the first line of treatment, a significant portion of individuals with epilepsy do not achieve adequate seizure control. For these patients, epilepsy surgery has emerged as a promising alternative, offering the potential for significant seizure reduction or even complete seizure freedom. In recent years, numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the outcomes and advancements in epilepsy surgery. This article aims to explore key findings from these studies, shedding light on the evolving landscape of epilepsy surgery.

Preoperative evaluation and patient selection

One crucial aspect of epilepsy surgery is the comprehensive preoperative evaluation. Accurate identification of the epileptic focus and understanding its association with surrounding brain structures are crucial for surgical planning. Recent research has emphasized the role of advanced neuroimaging techniques such as high-resolution Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Positron Emission Tomography (PET), and Magnetoencephalography (MEG) in enhancing the accuracy of localization. These imaging modalities allow neurosurgeons to precisely identify the seizure focus and develop significant surgical approaches for each patient, resulting in improved outcomes.

Surgical techniques and approaches

Advancements in surgical techniques have significantly contributed to the success of epilepsy surgery. Traditional approaches, such as anterior temporal lobectomy and corpus callosotomy, continue to yield positive outcomes. However, minimally invasive procedures have gained popularity due to their potential to reduce surgical trauma and improve postoperative recovery. Techniques such as laser ablation and stereotactic radiosurgery offer precise targeting of the epileptic focus while minimizing invasiveness. These procedures have shown promising results, particularly in cases where the focus is located in eloquent brain areas that are traditionally considered challenging for surgical resection.

Seizure outcomes and quality of life

One of the primary goals of epilepsy surgery is to achieve seizure control and improve the quality of life for patients. Several studies have reported significant seizure reduction and even seizure freedom in a substantial proportion of patients who underwent surgery. Long-term follow-ups have consistently demonstrated sustained improvements in seizure control and significant enhancements in patients' overall well-being and quality of life. Beyond seizure outcomes, patients often experience improvements in psychosocial functioning, cognition, and social interactions, allowing them to lead more fulfilling lives.

Cognitive and functional considerations

The impact of epilepsy surgery on cognitive function has been a topic of extensive investigation. Earlier studies raised concerns about potential cognitive decline following surgery, particularly in patients undergoing temporal lobe resections. However, recent research has shown that careful patient selection, surgical approaches, and postoperative rehabilitation programs play a major role in preserving cognitive function. Moreover, advancements in surgical techniques, such as selective amygdalohippocampectomy, have demonstrated superior preservation of memory functions compared to traditional procedures. These findings emphasize the importance of individualized approaches in epilepsy surgery to optimize both seizure control and cognitive outcomes.

Pediatric epilepsy surgery

Epilepsy surgery in pediatric patients presents unique challenges and considerations. Recent studies have focused on refining surgical techniques and optimizing outcomes in this vulnerable population. The use of Intracranial Electroencephalography (iEEG) monitoring has revolutionized the localization of the epileptic focus, allowing for precise surgical planning and

Correspondence to: Helene Beloeil, Department of Surgery, Keio University School of Medicine, Tokyo, Japan, E-mail: helenebeloeil@gmail.com

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minimizing the risk of functional impairment. Long-term studies have shown favorable seizure outcomes and improved developmental trajectories in children who undergo surgery at an early stage, highlighting the critical role of early intervention in improving long-term outcomes.