The use of the Fisher anatomical subunit approach for cleft lip revision: An Evolution and Case Series

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INTRODUCTION

Many techniques exist to reapproximate a cleft lip but can leave unsatisfactory results with non-anatomic scars and a short upper lip. Because of this, the need for cleft lip revision often arises years after the initial repair. Many revisions focus on adjacent tissue transfers and realignment of landmarks, but in the senior surgeons’ experience, entirely re-creating the defect and utilizing the Fisher repair for revision has led to aesthetically pleasing results and less noticeable scars.

METHODS

- A database was collected that included all cleft lip revisions performed at a large, comprehensive children’s hospital from October 2018 to July 2021.
- Inclusion criteria:
  - Cleft patient with a cleft lip revision performed by two craniofacial surgeons regardless of previous repair history.
- Data collected:
  - Demographic data
  - Characteristics of the cleft lip (laterality and complete or incomplete defect)
  - Age at initial repair
  - Type of initial repair
  - Previous revisions
  - Age at index revision and type of revision with any additional tissue rearrangement
  - Rhinoplasty

- Sixty-five patients were identified
- 75.4% of patients previously underwent repair of a unilateral cleft lip and 24.6% of a bilateral cleft lip.
- The type of initial repair is known in sixty-four cases (98.5%), with the majority being a Millard repair.
- Twenty-two of the total subset of patients (33.8%) had a previous revision prior to their index revision with the senior surgeons
- The average revision age is 9.6 years, ranging from three to twenty-four years.

RESULTS

- In follow up, all patients demonstrated an improvement in lip aesthetics

CONCLUSION

The necessity for cleft lip revision derives from suboptimal results of initial treatment. Here we have demonstrated a large subset of patients that have undergone cleft lip revision using the Fisher technique. In the senior surgeons’ experience, the Fisher repair technique in the setting of cleft lip revision is an ideal way to address the shortcomings of historical repair techniques.

CONTACT

Research was performed under and in full compliance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Mississippi Medical Center

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