

Factors affecting mortality in patients over 70 years of age submitted to surgery for gallbladder or common bile duct stones

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Chile is the country with the highest incidence of gallstone disease in the world. Nearly 44% of the women and 25% of the men over 20 years of age have gallstones. Biliary tract surgery accounts for about 35% of all the operations performed in Chilean general hospitals. The present paper aims at assessing the risk factors associated with a higher mortality in patients over 70 years of age subjected to elective or emergency surgery for gallstones or common bile duct stones. No specific factors of mortality were found in the group of elderly patients subjected to elective cholecystectomy. There was also no correlation between types of cholecystitis and postoperative mortality. However, acute suppurative cholangitis made the postoperative mortality rate increase almost 20-fold in patients with common bile duct stones. The mortality also shows a steep increase (up to 12%) if cholecystectomy is performed in acute cholecystitis. Cholecystostomy seems to be associated with a low mortality risk