

Long-term follow-up after laparoscopic cholecystectomy without routine intraoperative cholangiography

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The indications for routine intraoperative cholangiography remain controversial. We present here our recent results concerning the frequency of unknown retained common bile duct stones in 253 consecutive patients who underwent laparoscopic cholecystectomy without intraoperative cholangiography in whom the presence of preoperative choledocholithiasis had been excluded by clinical, biochemical, and ultrasonographic evaluation. These patients were followed up for at least 4 years after surgery with evaluations similar to those made preoperatively. Freedom from symptoms and normal test results were found in 96.8% of patients. Jaundice and abnormal liver function test results were demonstrated in 3.2% of patients, but retained common bile duct stones were found in only 2.3% of patients. We conclude that laparoscopic cholecystectomy without routine intraoperative cholangiography can be performed safely without the discovery of a high percentage of retained common bile duct stones at later fo