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Summary

DEFINING THE STANDARD LENGTH OF PERORAL ENDOSCOPIC MYOTOMY (POEM) FOR ACHALASIA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND METANALYSIS

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A systematic review and meta-analysis of 31 studies with 3023 patients found that the pooled mean myotomy length during standard POEM is 10.4 cm, with no trend toward shorter myotomy despite evidence supporting efficacy of limited myotomy.

KEY POINTS

- The pooled mean total myotomy length across standard POEM procedures was 10.39 cm (95% CI 10.06-10.71), comprising 7.11 cm esophageal and 2.81 cm gastric myotomy
- In non-spastic achalasia (type I and II), mean myotomy length was 10.17 cm, while type III achalasia showed longer myotomy at 14.02 cm
- Clinical success rate was 91% (95% CI 88.9%-93.2%) at median 29-month follow-up, with post-POEM clinical reflux occurring in 26% (95% CI 21.0%-31.3%)
- No geographical differences were observed between eastern (10.2 cm) and western countries (10.95 cm), and no time trend toward shorter myotomy was found between 2014-2018 and 2019-2022
- High heterogeneity across studies (I^2 99.3%) confirms that POEM technique requires further standardization despite evidence that myotomy limited to under 6 cm may be effective with less reflux

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