LONG TERM SINGLE CENTER COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF POST-POEM GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX AND ITS SEQUELAE IN MORE THAN 500 PATIENTS

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A retrospective analysis of 519 patients who underwent peroral endoscopic myotomy (POEM) for achalasia shows that reflux esophagitis rates decline from 39.1% at 3 months to 20.5% at 6 years, but approximately half of patients require long-term proton pump inhibitor therapy.

KEY POINTS

- Among 390 patients tested at 3 months post-POEM, 45.6% had abnormal acid exposure on 24-hour pH monitoring off proton pump inhibitors.
- Reflux esophagitis decreased over time: 39.1% at 3 months, 35.7% at 24-36 months, and 20.5% at 6 years, with severe esophagitis (LA grade C/D) declining from 4.3% at 3 months to 0% at 6 years.
- At 48, 60, and 72 months, approximately 53%, 48%, and 54% of patients were taking proton pump inhibitors, with 80% using them daily.
- Severe reflux complications were rare: no new cases of Barrett's esophagus or esophageal adenocarcinoma occurred, and one patient developed a peptic stricture that was successfully treated with balloon dilation.
- The authors conclude that patients after POEM should remain under long-term surveillance despite the low risk of reflux complications.

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