NEEDLE KNIFE PAPILLOTOMY AND FISTULOTOMY IN SUPER-ELDERLY (> 90 YEARS OF AGE): SAFETY AND OUTCOMES

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A retrospective study of 249 patients with difficult biliary cannulation found that needle knife papillotomy and fistulotomy achieved similar technical success and complication rates in patients 90 years and older compared to younger patients, though early mortality was higher in the super-elderly group.

KEY POINTS

- Among 34 patients aged 90-101 years and 215 patients aged 41-89 years who underwent needle knife techniques for difficult biliary cannulation, final session cannulation success rates were comparable (97.1% versus 97.2%, P greater than 0.999).
- Complication rates were not significantly different between super-elderly and younger groups (11.8% versus 16.3%), with complications including pancreatitis, perforation, bleeding, and cholecystitis.
- Early mortality rate was significantly higher in patients 90 years and older compared to younger patients (17.2% versus 2.8%, P equals 0.009), though there were no procedure-related deaths in either group.
- The super-elderly group had significantly more patients with ASA physical status class 3 or higher (47.1% versus 27.9%, P equals 0.029), reflecting greater baseline medical complexity.
- This material is relevant for endoscopists and gastroenterologists managing difficult biliary access in very elderly patients.

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