

OPINION

By Assoc. prof. Pencho Tonchev, MD, PhD,
Department of Surgical Nursery, MU – Pleven,
appointed member of the academic jury with Order № P-109-172/
01.03.2023 by the Rector of MU – Varna,
regarding the dissertation thesis and summary on the topic:

PELVIC AND INTESTINAL ABSCESESSES

The thesis was submitted for public defense before the academic jury for
awarding the academic and educational degree Philosophy Doctor,

Area of higher education: 7.Healthcare and sport,

Professional field: 7.1.Medicine

Specialty: Generalsurgery

Author: Dr. Hristo Nikov,

PhD student in the Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine at the
Medical University in Varna

Academic supervisor:

Assoc. Prof. Plamen Milchev Chernopolsky, MD., PhD

Topicality of the dissertation subject

Intra-abdominal abscesses are a common surgical problem known to medicine since ancient times, but they continue to pose a challenge to surgeons regarding the diagnostic-therapeutic algorithm of behavior. Thanks to antibiotics, the death rate is now lower, but the disease has a somewhat "insidious," hidden course of action. Untreated abdominal abscesses often lead to a fatal outcome. The associated pathophysiological consequences are life-threatening, leading to a prolonged period of morbidity and prolonged hospital stay, and negative socio-economic consequences. The early diagnosis and recognition of the associated pathology, based on the clinical assessment and the laboratory and instrumental studies carried out, are essential for preparing an appropriate, individually tailored therapeutic strategy. Adequate control of the source and effective antimicrobial therapy are the two main "problems" of therapy determining the favorable treatment outcome. And now in the arsenal of surgery are operative exploration, mechanical debridement and drainage of the abscess cavity. Over the past fifty years, image-guided procedures have been developed as an adjunct to modern surgical drainage techniques. Remarkable advances in diagnosing and treating these diseases are due to the improved capabilities and availability of imaging. Image-guided therapy now provides different approaches for the drainage of limited inflammatory collections. These facts, as well as better knowledge of the pathophysiology of abscess formation, their complications, and timely diagnosis and treatment, determine the decreasing mortality rate these days. Therefore, I believe that the topic is relevant not only to our country but also internationally. The topic of the dissertation work of Dr. Hr. Nikov is valuable for enriching the clinical practice in Bulgaria.

Structure

This opinion was prepared for the presented dissertation thesis, which includes 129 pages, illustrated with 40 tables and 18 figures. The work is structured by the rules for writing a dissertation thesis with good balance in the proportion between the separate sections. It is a pleasure to emphasize the high informative value of the figures and tables illustrating the text. The author demonstrates mastery of various statistical methods through which the aim of the research is achieved. The statistically significant results are very well discussed in the thesis and the author's summary.

Knowledge of the problem

Overall, the literature review reflects the present state of the problem and demonstrates Dr Nikov's knowledge of the subject. The author used 143 references, 119 in Latin and 25 in Cyrillic, 80% of which date from the past 10 years. The literature review manifests the author's capacity for analyzing and summarizing literary data.

The aim of the thesis is " To study, analyze, classify and standardize the diagnosis, preoperative approach and treatment of patients with malignant and intestinal abscesses in order to optimize treatment outcome, reduce complications, rehospitalizations and achieve a better quality of life."

The author has set himself **5 tasks** that are well formulated and correspond to the logical approach to achieve the aim of the thesis.

Research method

Prospectively and Retrospectively, 160 patients with intra-abdominal abscesses of various origins, treated at the "St. Marina-Varna" UMBAL over a 10-year period, were studied. Appropriate clinical, operative, and statistical methods are applied to solve the tasks. Applied scientific methods are presented in great detail. Statistical processing of the results allows for reaching of reasonable conclusions about the studied characteristics.

Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation work of Dr. Hr. Nikov is dedicated to the development of a current topic with an important practical application, using an appropriate methodology, and the obtained results correspond to the set goal.

From the large-scale studies carried out, seven conclusions were formulated, which correspond to the presented results.

I accept the formulated five contributions of the dissertation work.

Through his dissertation work, the PhD student has demonstrated his knowledge of scientific research methodology, capacity for literature analysis, ability to identify a scientific problem, formulate a hypothesis, aim, and research tasks, to select and use the appropriate methods of analysis and reach the correct conclusions corresponding to the study results. I think Dr Nikov has made an excellent achievement in realizing his work.

The author's summary of the thesis is following the Act on Development of the Academic staff.

Evaluation of the publications and personal contribution of the PhD student

Dr Nikov has published the results from his research for the scientific community here in Bulgaria and abroad. He has three publications related to the topic. This is solid proof that the dissertation thesis is a personal achievement of the PhD student and a result of his systematic long-lasting work on the problem.

Conclusion

The dissertation thesis presented for opinion by Dr Hristo Yuri Nikov, titled "PELVIC AND INTESTINAL ABSCESSSES," fully meets the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. Here is an up-to-date, well-planned, and well-realized scientific work.

Based on the above, I give my fully convinced, positive evaluation of the dissertation thesis.

I would like to appeal to the respectable members of the academic jury to award Dr Hristo Nikov the scientific and educational degree of Philosophy Doctor in General Surgery and give my full support for it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'PT', located in the center-right of the page.

4th May, 2023
Pleven

Assoc.prof. Pencho Tonchev, MD, PhD