



Gastroenterology Research and Practice

Special Issue on
Update in Biliary Lithiasis

CALL FOR PAPERS

Biliary lithiasis is a significant health problem in developed societies. Gallstones are a major cause of morbidity worldwide, affecting 10% to 15% of the adult population. Although it is estimated that 60 to 80% of all gallstones are asymptomatic and incidentally discovered during diagnostic procedures, the natural history of the cholelithiasis may include a wide range of complications, such as cholecystitis, acute pancreatitis, and even gallbladder cancer. Gallstone disease is one of the leading causes for hospital admission and cholecystectomy is currently the most commonly performed abdominal surgical operation.

At the time of surgery, 11-21% of patients with cholelithiasis also have concomitant common bile duct stones. The clinical presentation of choledocholithiasis may vary from asymptomatic forms (up to half of the cases) to potentially life-threatening conditions (ascending cholangitis or acute pancreatitis). Choledocholithiasis diagnosis and management have radically changed over the last 30 years, since the large diffusion of laparoscopy, endoscopic procedures, and new imaging modalities.

It is necessary to define a precise algorithm based on a risk stratification of patients with a suspicion of common bile duct stones, in order to avoid unnecessary examinations. Actually the management of biliary lithiasis remains more conditioned by the availability of instrumentation and multidisciplinary skills than the cost-effectiveness.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Epidemiology of biliary lithiasis: possibility of a genetic background
- ▶ Pathogenesis of stone formation with particular emphasis on emerging risk factors in modern society
- ▶ Clinical criteria to predict the risk of choledocholithiasis
- ▶ Imaging in the diagnosis of biliary lithiasis
- ▶ Role of endoscopic examinations in the management of biliary lithiasis: endoscopic retrograde cholangiography, endoscopic ultrasound, ERC-associated intraductal US, and endoscopic cholangioscopy
- ▶ Interventional radiology in biliary lithiasis
- ▶ Surgery in biliary lithiasis: from the traditional “open” approach to laparoscopy and the “rendez-vous” technique
- ▶ New frontiers in mini-invasive biliary surgery: SILS, NOTES, and robotics
- ▶ Intra- and extracorporeal lithotripsy

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