

Retrievable vena cava filters: a review.

Hemostasis and thrombosis

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Abstract:

Purpose of review: To examine the current literature regarding retrievable inferior vena cava filters and to discuss the appropriate indications for their clinical use.

Recent findings: Permanent filters have been shown to be effective, but have a number of long-term complications such as filter thrombosis or migration. Indications for their placement should be accurately evaluated, especially in patients with a long life expectancy, or in whom the period of contraindication to anticoagulation is short. On the other hand, temporary filters are difficult to manage and their maximum implantation time is often insufficient to solve the clinical problem leading to their placement. Four different retrievable filters recently received approval for temporary insertion. Recent data suggest that the use of these filters may be related to a low rate of pulmonary embolism and insertion complications. Nevertheless, no randomized clinical trials have been performed, and the only available data refer to retrospective or prospective studies.

Summary: Retrievable filters are a new generation of filter that offers the attractive possibility of being left in place permanently or being removed after quite a long period when they become unnecessary.