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Additional clinical experience with a long-term retrieval optional vena cava filter

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Purpose: Insertion of a permanent vena cava filter has been shown to reduce occurrence of pulmonary embolism (PE) despite an increased risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) at long-term. Retrievable or optional caval filters offer the ability to be removed or not, according to PE exposure.

Materials/Methods: A bi-centric retrospective study was performed to assess filter efficacy and ability to remove the ALN filter in patients with severe acute venous thromboembolism associated with at least one indication of filter, such as contraindication to anticoagulant (mainly due to haemorrhagic phenomena), acute major surgery, and recurrence of venous thromboembolism despite anticoagulant.

Results: This study included 367 (280 + 87) patients with DVT (26%), PE (13%) or both (61%). After a median follow-up of 12.1 months, two episodes of PE and three filter thromboses occurred. A decision of filter removal was taken for 84 (65+19) patients (22.9%); all filter retrievals were successful without any complication. The median implantation period was 103 days (range: six days- 24 months).

Conclusion: These preliminary results confirm the efficacy of the ALN filter. They also demonstrate the feasibility and safety of retrieval up to 24 months after implantation.

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