ABSTRACT

Classification systems for aortic dissection provide important guides to clinical decision-making, but the relevance of traditional categorization schemes is being questioned in an era when endovascular techniques are assuming a growing role in the management of this frequently complex and catastrophic event. In recognition of the expanding range of interventional therapies now used as alternatives to conventional treatment approaches, the Working Group on Aortic Diseases of theDEFINE Project developed a categorization system that features the specific anatomic and clinical manifestations of the disease process that are most relevant to contemporary decision-making.

The DISSECT classification system is a mnemon-based approach to the evaluation of aortic dissection. It guides clinicians through an assessment of 6 critical characteristics that facilitate optimal communication of the most salient details that currently influence the selection of a therapeutic option, including those findings that are key when considering an endovascular procedure, but are not taken into account by the DeBakey or Stanford categorization schemes. The 6 features of aortic dissection include: Duration of disease; Intimal tear location; Size of the dissected aorta; Segmental Extent of aortic involvement; Complications of the dissection; and Thrombus within the aortic false lumen. In current clinical practice, endovascular therapy is increasingly considered as an alternative to medical management or open surgical repair of aortic dissection. The use of a new system for categorization of aortic dissection, DISSECT, addresses the shortcomings of well-known established schemes devised over 40 years ago before the introduction of endovascular techniques. It will serve as a guide to support a critical analysis of contemporary therapeutic options and inform management decisions based on specific features of the disease process.


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Distinguish the anatomic outcomes and clinical results of medical therapy, open surgical repair and endografts for a variety of dissection sub-groups.

Analyze the patient factors, lesion characteristics and clinical features that are important in selecting a therapeutic option of aortic dissection.

Compare the range of endovascular therapies available to manage complicated cases of aortic dissection.

Examine the basic rationale and goals of endovascular management of acute and chronic aortic dissection.

Global Learning Objectives

- Critically analyze research, guidelines and appropriate use criteria to develop evidence-based recommendations for the management of aortic dissection.
- Distinguish the anatomic outcomes and clinical results of medical therapy, open surgical repair and endografts for a variety of dissection sub-groups.
- Analyze the patient factors, lesion characteristics and clinical features that are important in selecting a therapeutic option of aortic dissection.
- Compare the range of endovascular therapies available to manage complicated cases of aortic dissection.
- Examine the basic rationale and goals of endovascular management of acute and chronic aortic dissection.

Session Learning Objectives

- Evaluate traditional aortic dissection classification systems and their limitations in the current era of endovascular options.
- Compare the range of endovascular therapies available to manage complicated cases of aortic dissection.
- Analyze the patient factors, lesion characteristics and clinical features that are important in selecting a therapeutic option of aortic dissection.
- Distinguish the anatomic outcomes and clinical results of medical therapy, open surgery, and endografts for a variety of dissection sub-groups.
- Stay awake.