Functional Repair of Bilateral Cleft Lip

Essay Submitted in partial fulfillment for Master Degree in General Surgery

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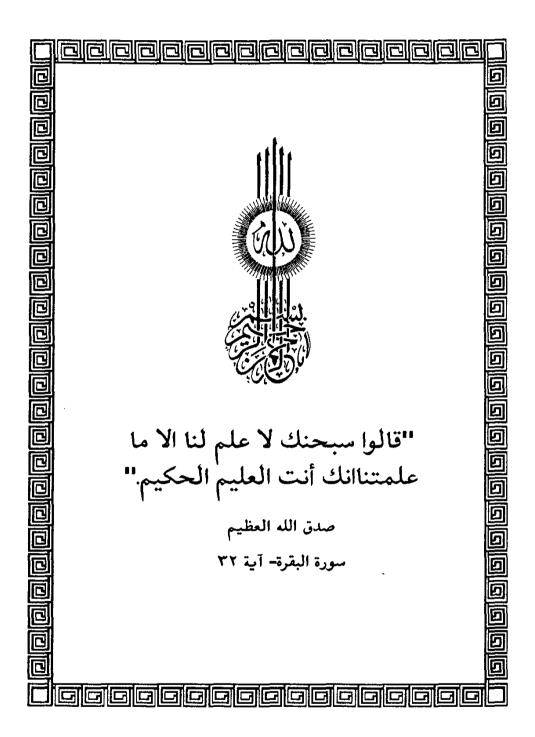
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CONTENTS

	age
INTRODUCTION	1
REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
Embryology	3
Normal Anatomy of the Lip	10
Aesthetics of the Normal Lip and nose	22
Pathological Anatomy of the Cleft Lip	25
Primary Repair of Bilateral Cleft Lip	40
Control of Protruding Premaxilla	. 41
Techniques of Bilateral Cleft Lip Repair	.49
1. Through and Through Techniques	49
(a) One Stage Procedures	49
(b) Two Stage Procedures	61
11. Techniques Using Tissue from The Lower Lip	73
111. Functional Repair Techniques	73
DISCUSSION	92
SUMMARY & CONCLUSION	100
REFERENCES	104
ARARIC SUMMARY	

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

Fig. (1): A, Lateral view of an embryo at the end of the fourth week	
showing the position of the pharyngeal arches; B, Frontal view of	
a four-and- one- half - week embryo	4
Fig. (2): Frontal aspect of the face. A, five week embryo; B, sex week	
embryo	4
Fig. (3): Frontal aspect of the face. A. seven - week embryo; B. 10-week	
embryo	5
Fig. (4): Mesoderm migrates over and around the head on either side to	
reinforce the branchial membranes of the face	6
Fig. (5): A Schematic drawing of horizontal section through the upper lip	
of a six-week embryo showing the grooves between the maxillary	
and medial nasal swellings	8
Fig. (6): Ventral view of the palate, gum, lip and nose	8
Fig. (7): The surfaces and border of the lip	11
Fig. (8): The outer, inner, and anterior surfaces of the lip	11
Fig. (9): Colour changes in the lip border	12
Fig. (10): The philtrum and Cupid's bow	12
Fig. (11): Muscles of the lip	14
Fig. (12): Diagrammatic representation of the orbicularis oris muscle as	
described in Gray's Anatomy	15

LIST OF FIGURES (CONT.)

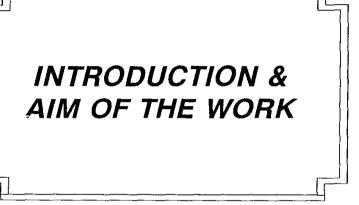
	Page
Fig. (13): A sagittal section upper lip showing, the superficial and deep	
orbicularis oris muscle components	16
Fig. (14): The deep orbicularis oris muscle	16
Fig. (15): The superficial orbicularis oris muscle	17
Fig. (16): The philtral ridges: Horizontal section of the upper lip to show	
formation of philtrum	20
Fig. (17): Normal lip and nose	23
Fig. (18): Normal measurements of lip and nose in neonates	23
Fig. (19): The nostril changes shape with age	24
Fig. (20): A simple notch in the single cleft of the upper lip	26
Fig. (21): Widening of the nostril floor and drooping of the alar and lower	
lateral cartilage in the clefted upper lip	26
Fig. (22): An incomplete double cleft of the upper lip	27
Fig. (23): Prolabium position in the double cleft of the upper lip	28
Fig. (24): Complete bilateral cleft lip with the permaxilla attached to the	
under surface of the Prolabium with a very shallow labial sulcus	29
Fig. (25): In complete bilateral clefts of the alveolus, the remnant of the	
alveolus separated out of the arch by the two celfts is attached to	
the prolabium of the lip	30
Fig. (26): A. Normal arrangement of the orbicularis oris muscle fibers;	
B. The orbicularis oris in a complete unilateral cleft	34
Fig. (27): Orbicularis oris abnormalities	36

LIST OF FIGURES (CONT.)

	Page
Fig. (28): Head cap to which 1/4 inch elastic is attached by means of	
Velcro or hooks and eyes	42
Fig. (29): A. The Quinn-Georgiade appliance for repositioning of the	
maxillary segments and premaxilla	45
Fig. (30): Surgical setback of the protruding premaxilla	48
Fig. (31): Barsky technique (1950)	49
Fig. (32): Veau III straight line closure	54
Fig. (33): Technique of Wynn	57
Fig. (34): Manchester Technique	59
Fig. (35): Millard two-stage method of complete bilateral cleft lip repair	
and elongation of the columella	60
Fig. (36): Tennison or zigzag type of repair	62
Fig. (37): First stage of Bauer, Trusler, and Tondra method	64
Fig. (38): Second stage of the Bauer, Trusler, and Tondra method	66
Fig. (39): Millard rotation-advancement procedure for incomplete biateral	
cleft lip	67
Fig. (40): Technique of Skoog in bilateral cleft lip repair	71
Fig. (41): Nicolau Technique	75
Fig. (42): Method of Mulliken: Stage 1	77
Fig. (43): Method of Mulliken: Stage 2	79
Fig. (44): Black Technique	81
Fig. (45): The Noordhoff technique in bilateral cleft lip repair	82

LIST OF FIGURES (CONT.)

	Page
Fig. (46): Technique of Nakajima et al.	85
Fig. (47): Technique of Cutting et al.	89



INTRODUCTION

Bilateral cleft of the lip and palate is by many standards the most complex and severe form of the deformity.

The complexity and severity of the defect requires an unusual degree off cooperation among all species and especially between the surgeon and the orthodontist, [Bardach, 1990].

The repair of a cleft lip, indeed the repair of many deformity, aims to restore the normal anatomy as far as is possible. Such a repair must be based on a thorough knowledge of the normal anatomy and a proper understanding of such displacement as may occur, [Abbe, 1988].

For bilateral cleft lip repair, the following operative principles are recommended by **Brown** [1947].

- (1) Maintain symmetry.
- (2) Secure primary muscle union.
- (3) Select proper prolabial size and configuration.
- (4) Form the median tubercle and mucocutaneous ridge from lateral lip tissue.
- (5) Construct the nasal tip and columella by anatomic placement of the alar cartilage.

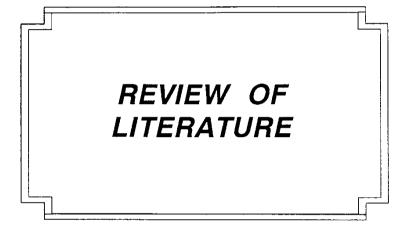
Functional cleft lip repair therefore, can produce a satisfactory appearance

after one operation even when done by surgeons with limited experience. This functional repair maintains three key elements of the lip that are difficult to achieve or restore secondarily by any surgeon, i.e. a good scar, maintenance of the alar -facial groove, and adequate lip height without compromise of horizontal lip length.

The revisions that might later be required to improve lip appearance are also accomplished with relatively simple straight forward reconstructive technique, [Dado, 1988].

Aim of the Work:

The aim of this essay is to review the different techniques of bilateral cleft lip repair with stress on the functional repair techniques.



EMBRYOLOGY

In mamals, development of the upper lip and the primary palate is intimately associated with the formation of the primitive mouth or stomodium. In an early somite embryo, the stomodium has the intact oral membrane as its floor and it is bounded cranially by neural plate, caudally by pericardium and laterally by the mandibular process of each first pharyngeal pouch.

By the late somite stage, the oral membrane has broken down, establishing continuity between the stomodium and the primitive pharynx, and another swelling. The maxillary process has grown towards the stomodium from the dorsal end of the first arch.

The stomodium is now bounded cranially by the frontal bulge of the forebrain, laterally by the early maxillary process and caudally by the mandibular processes which approach each other and fuse across the midline to form the primitive lower jaw and lip, (Fig. 1).

Bilateral ectodermal thickenings (the olfactory nasal placode) appear above the lateral angles of the stomodium. Proliferation of the mesenchyme near each placode causes the elevation of a horse show shaped area of the surrounding ectoderm. The limbs of the horse shoe are termed the medial and lateral nasal folds, (Fig. 2,3). The nasal folds, together with the intervening convex frontal area, constitute the frontonasal process.

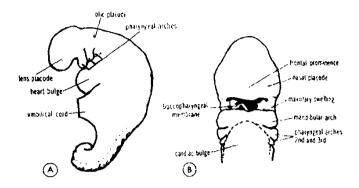


Fig. (1): A, Lateral view of an embryo at the end of the fourth week showing the position of the pharyngeal arches; B, Frontal view of a four-and- one half - week embryo. Note the break down of the buccopharyngeal membrane and the location of the mandibular and maxillary swellings. The nasal placodes are visible on either side of the frontal prominence. [After: Sadler, 1985]

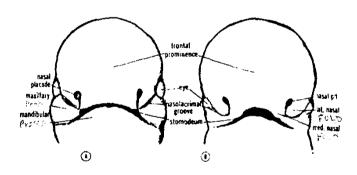


Fig. (2): Frontal aspect of the face. A, five week embryo; B, sex week embryo. The nasal swellings are gradually separated from the maxillary swelling by deep furrows. At no time during normal development does the tissue in the furrows break down. [After: Sadler, 1985]