

## ABSTRACT OF MEETING

**German Society of Traumatology, 41st Meeting, Nov. 1977, Berlin. Springer Verlag**

Pp. 285—Problems of cervical cord injuries.

Among the papers is an outstandingly good account of morphology and pathogenesis of cord trauma by Jellinger, Vienna.

There is also an ambitious, detailed account of cervical cord injury by Karimi-Nejad, Cologne, in which he attempts to compare the results of conservative and of operative treatment from the anterior approach.

He has collected material from eight neurosurgical West-German departments and tabulated it in detailed statistical tables. These are somewhat confusing, since he has tried to include too many different data. The final statistical figures and his concluding sentence claiming better operative than conservative results are open to doubt.

Among the necessary criticisms are: the inclusion of patients without either bony or neurological injury, the absence of mention of additional (head, chest, abdominal or limb) injuries having a bearing on the results, no mention of the period of bed-rest, rehabilitation and stay in hospital, time and cause of deaths and a comparison with the results of other departments of traumatology (Spinal Centres, Orthopaedic departments).

As the author admits, no conclusions as to the relative merits of conservative and operative treatments can be drawn.<sup>1</sup>

As to techniques, the X-ray controls shown are singularly bad and the use of wire-slings for fixation of grafts very old-fashioned. There was one case of operative infection and six in which the operation had to be repeated.

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<sup>1</sup> Actually on page 335 where the author discusses mortality in operations during the first 24 hours the mortality rate was 41 per cent. This proves the fallacy of his previous statement that the operative treatment in 30 *selected cases* showed better results than an equal number of conservatively treated patients.