Liver transplantation in polycystic liver disease: A relevant treatment modality for adults?

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Objective. Polycystic liver disease (PLD) is a rare, hereditary, benign disorder. Hepatic failure is uncommon and symptoms are caused by mass effects leading to abdominal distension and pain. Liver transplantation (LTX) offers fully curative treatment, but there is still some controversy about whether it is a relevant modality considering the absence of liver failure, relative organ shortage, perioperative risks and lifelong immunosuppression. The purpose of this study was to review our experience of LTX for PLD and to compare the survival with the overall survival of patients who underwent LTX from 1992 to 2005. Material and methods. A retrospective study of the journals of 440 patients, who underwent 506 LTXs between 1992 and 2005, showed that 14 patients underwent LTX for PLD. All patients had normal liver function. Three were receiving haemodialysis and thus underwent combined liver/kidney transplantation. One patient had undergone kidney transplantation 10 years earlier. Results. Median follow-up was 55 months. One patient who underwent combined transplantation died after 5.4 months because of multiorgan failure after re-LTX, and one patient, with well-functioning grafts, died of lymphoma after 7 months. At present 12 patients are alive, relieved of symptoms and with good graft function. Conclusions. We conclude that patients treated for PLD by LTX have a good long-term prognosis and excellent relief of symptoms and that LTX might be considered in severe cases of PLD, where conventional surgery is not an option.

PMID: 17852873 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]