

UPDATE OF AUTOPSY-DETERMINED CAUSES OF DEATH IN SOLID ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS

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OBJECTIVES: Review the main causes of death as determined by autopsy of deceased solid organ transplant recipients in our hospital.

METHODS: We reviewed 191 autopsies including 91 heart, 39 liver, 35 kidney, and 26 lung transplant recipients from 1999 to 2006.

RESULTS: Infections were the most common cause of death in all groups, varying from 23.46% in heart to 53.84% in lung recipients. Acute rejection only appeared as the cause of death in heart recipients (8.90%) and primary graft failure was present in 6.6% of all cases (78.57% heart, 14.28% kidney, lung 7.14% and liver 7.14%). Surgical complications were present in 4.71% of cases, with the highest rate in heart transplant recipients (66.66%). In all groups there was a significant percentage (33.33%) of other pathologies that were responsible for death, such as pulmonary embolism, central nervous system pathology (preferently stroke), acute pancreatitis, digestive haemorrhage and acute myocardial infarction.

CONCLUSION: Our results emphasize that infections are the main cause of death post transplant, independent of the organ transplanted.