**Name of Journal:** ***World Journal of*** ***Gastroenterology***

**Manuscript NO: 42089**

**Manuscript Type:** **ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

***Retrospective Study***

**Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection:** **An effective and safe therapy for upper gastrointestinal submucosal tumors originating from the** **muscularis propria layer**

Du C *et al*. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for tumors

Chen Du, Ning-Li Chai, En-Qiang Ling-Hu, Zhen-Juan Li, Long-Song Li, Jia-Le Zou, Lei Jiang, Zhong-Sheng Lu, Jiang-Yun Meng, Ping Tang

**Chen Du, Ning-Li Chai, En-Qiang Ling-Hu, Zhen-Juan Li, Long-Song Li, Jia-Le Zou, Lei Jiang, Zhong-Sheng Lu, Jiang-Yun Meng, Ping Tang****,** Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Chinese PLA General Hospital, Beijing 100853, China

**ORCID number:** Chen Du (0000-0002-0176-8105); Ning-Li Chai (0000-0002-6791-5817); En-Qiang Ling-Hu (0000-0003-4506-7877); Zhen-Juan Li (0000-0001-7929-6622); Long-Song Li (0000-0002-4000-7501); Jia-Le Zou (0000-0003-4534-9700); Lei Jiang (0000-0001-8623-661X); Zhong-Sheng Lu (0000-0003-4628-6211); Jiang-Yun Meng (0000-0002-6531-1673); Ping Tang (0000-0002-7401-1330 ).

**Author contributions:** Ling-Hu EQ, Chai NL and Du C designed the study;Linghu EQ, Chai NL, Lu ZS, Meng JY, and Tang P performed the research; Du C, Li ZJ, Li LS, Zou JL and Jiang L contributed new reagents or analytic tools; Du C and Li ZJ analysed the data; Du C wrote the paper; Ling-Hu EQ and Chai NL made critical revisions to the article for important intellectual content; all authors approved the final article; Du C and Chai NL contributed equally to this manuscript.

**Supported by** theNational Program on Key Research Project (13-5 program),No. 2016YFC1303601, and Chinese PLA General Hospital Clinical Research, No. 2012FC-TSYS-3035.

**Institutional review board statement:** The clinical trial of this paper was reviewed and approved by the Committee of Medical Ethics of Chinese PLA General Hospital.

**Informed consent statement:** All study participants, or their legal guardian,

provided informed written consent prior to study enrolment.

**Conflict-of-interest statement:** We have no financial relationships to disclose.

**Data sharing statement:** No additional data are available.

**Open-Access:** This article is an open-access article which was selected by an in-house editor and fully peer-reviewed by external reviewers. It is distributed in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial (CC BY-NC 4.0) license, which permits others to distribute, remix, adapt, build upon this work non-commercially, and license their derivative works on different terms, provided the original work is properly cited and the use is non-commercial. See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

**Manuscript source:** Unsolicited manuscript

**Corresponding author to: En-Qiang Ling-Hu, MD, PhD, Professor,** Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Chinese PLA General Hospital, No.28 of Fuxing Road, Haidian District, Beijing 100853, China. linghuenqiang@vip.sina.com

**Telephone: +**86-10-68182255

**Fax**: +86-10-68154653

**Received:** September 27, 2018

**Peer-review started:** September 27, 2018

**First decision:** October 23, 2018

**Revised:** November 19, 2018

**Accepted:** December 19, 2018

**Article in press:**

**Published online:**

**Abstract**

***AIM***

To evaluate the effectiveness and safety of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection (STER) and compare its outcomes in the esophagus and cardia.

***METHODS***

From May 2012 to November 2017, 173 consecutive patients with upper gastrointestinal (GI) submucosal tumors (SMTs) of the muscularis propria layer underwent STER. Overall, 165 patients were included, and 8 were excluded. The baseline characteristics of the patients and SMTs were noted. The *en bloc* resection rate, complete resection rate, residual rate and recurrence rate were calculated to evaluated the effectiveness of STER, and the complication rate was noted to evaluate its safety. Effectiveness and safety outcomes were compared between esophageal and cardial SMTs.

***RESULTS***

One hundred and twelve men and 53 women with a mean age of 46.9 ± 10.8 years were included. The mean tumor size was 22.6 ± 13.6 mm. Eleven SMTs were located in the upper esophagus (6.7%), 49 in the middle esophagus (29.7%), 46 in the lower esophagus (27.9%), and 59 in the cardia (35.7%). Irregular lesions accounted for 48.5% of all lesions. STER achieved an *en bloc* resection rate of 78.7% (128/165) for GI SMTs with an overall complication rate of 21.2% (35/165). All complications resolved without intervention or were treated conservatively without the need for surgery. The *en bloc* resection rates of esophageal and cardial SMTs were 81.1% (86/106) and 72.1% (42/59), respectively (*P =* 0.142), and the complication rates were19.8% (21/106) and 23.7% (14/59), respectively, (*P =* 0.555). The most common complications for esophageal SMTs were gas-related complications and fever, while mucosal injury was the most common for cardial SMTs.

***CONCLUSION***

STER is an effective and safetherapy for GI SMTs of the MP layer. Its effectiveness and safety were also comparable between SMTs of the esophageal and cardia.

**Key words:** Endoscopic resection; Submucosal tunnel; Submucosal tumor; Muscularis propria layer; Esophagus; Cardia

**© The Author(s) 2018.** Published by Baishideng Publishing Group Inc. All rights reserved.

**Core tip:** Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection (STER) was initially reported in 2012 for the resection of submucosal tumors (SMTs) originating from muscularis propria. It has an advantage in maintaining the integrity of mucosa. Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness and safety of STER; however; few studies have enrolled large populations over 100 cases and compared the effectiveness and safety of STER for SMTs located in different locations. In this study; we aimed to further evaluate the effectiveness and safety of STER for gastrointestinal SMTs in a large population and compare the feasibility of STER for resection of esophageal and cardial SMTs.

Du C, Chai NL, Ling-Hu EQ, Li ZJ, Li LS, Zou JL, Jiang L, Lu ZS, Meng JY, Tang P. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection: An effective and safe therapy for upper gastrointestinal submucosal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *World J Gastroenterol* 2018; In press

**INTRODUCTION**

A submucosal tumor (SMT) is defined as a protuberance in the gastrointestinal tract with a normal mucosa-covered surface. SMTs are often incidentally detected on imaging. SMTs have a broad differential while most SMTs with a diameter less than 3 cm are believed to be benign leiomyomas[1].However, a proportion of SMTs, such as gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GISTs), have malignant potential[2]. SMTs have a greater probability of malignancy when they originate from the muscularis propria (MP) layer, have a large diameter, or are mesenchymal neoplasms[3-7].

Thus, the accurate diagnosis of SMTs is of the greatest importance to guide further treatment. Without resection, it is difficult to obtain an accurate diagnosis of the subtypes of SMTs even with endoscopic ultrasound-guided fine needle aspiration (EUS-FNA) and biopsy, which are regarded as the most reliable methods for obtaining a histological diagnosis[8-11]. Lifelong follow-up not only increases the financial burden and psychological stress to the patients but also delays the urgent diagnosis of malignancy and treatment[12-14].

Digestive endoscopic tunnel technique (DETT) was first reported by Ling-Hu *et al*[15,16] in 2009. In 2010, Inoue *et al*[17] reported peroral endoscopic myotomy (POEM) using DETT for the treatment of achalasia cardia (AC).Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection (STER), which was inspired by DETT, was initially reported by Xu *et al*[18] in 2012 for the resection of SMTs originating from the MP layer. A tunnel between the mucosa and the MP layer is established, and the operation is performed within the tunnel. SMTs are resected while tits mucosal coving was maintained. Although endoscopic submucosal excavation (ESE) and endoscopic full-thickness resection (EFR) have been reported to be effective and safe for the resection of SMTs located in the MP[19-23], they fail to maintain the integrity of the mucosa like the STER procedure. SMTs located in the cardia are considered more challenging and difficult to be resected with STER than those located in the esophagus. Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness and safety of STER[12,14,24-26], however, but few studies have enrolled large populations of more than 100 cases and compared the effectiveness and safety of STER for SMTs located in different locations[27,28]. In this retrospective study, we aimed to further evaluate the effectiveness and safety of STER for gastrointestinal (GI) SMTs originating from the MP layer in a large population and compare the feasibility of STER for resection of esophageal and cardial SMTs.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

***Patients***

From May 2012 to November 2017, at our center, STER was performed on 173 consecutive patients diagnosed with GI SMTs originating from the MP layer. In all, 165 patients were included, and 8 were excluded (Figure 1). We excluded three patients with gastric antrum SMTs who underwent STER due to the small number of patients and because STER is less commonly performed in the antrum and requires further evaluation. The bent anatomical orientation of the stomach makes it challenging to perform STER because of the difficulty in establishing a submucosal tunnel. One patient diagnosed with cancer was excluded because the disease was not indicative of STER. Two patients with more than one SMTs were excluded to eliminate the intervention for results. Two patients with AC and cardial SMTs underwent POEM and STER simultaneously and were excluded for the difficulty in the evaluation of the outcomes of STER.

In our study, patients with SMTs were considered eligible for STER if the following criteria were met: (1) SMTs were covered with intact mucosa; (2) SMTs originated from the MP layer as confirmed by CT and/or endoscopic ultrasound (EUS); (3) SMTs had a transverse diameter of no more than 35.0 mm (≤ 35.0 mm); (4) patients were older than 18 years old; (5) patients had no signs of metastasis or invasion outside the digestive tract; (6) SMTs had no high-risk features of malignancy as assessed by EUS; and (7) patients signed informed consent. The exclusion criteria were as follows: (1) SMTs that were located less than 3-5 cm from the esophageal inlet; (2) SMTs that had signs of metastasis and/or invasion outside the digestive tract; (3) SMTs that were considered to be high-risk from surgery, such as those with an abundant blood supply; (4) patients who were pregnancy; and (5) patients with coagulopathies (international normalized ratio > 1.5 and/or a platelet count < 50000). SMTs located in the upper esophagus at a distance less than 3-5 cm could not be resected by STER because of insufficient room to produce a tunnel.

***STER procedures***

Preoperative mediastinal enhanced CT and EUS (Prosound F75, Aloka, Tokyo, Japan and GF-UCT260, Olympus, Tokyo, Japan) were recommended for patients with suspected SMTs to evaluate the size, location, shape and depth of the tumors and to rule out invasion outside the digestive tract and metastasis. All patients fasted for 8 h before the procedures. STER was performed by experts with POEM experience in more than 100 cases.

STER was performed on patients under general anesthesia with a single-accessory channel endoscope (GIF Q260J/GIF Q290, Olympus, Tokyo, Japan) equipped with a transparent cap (D-201-11802, Olympus). A carbon dioxide (CO2) insufflator (UCR, Olympus) was used to achieve CO2 insufflation. A high-frequency generator (VIO 200D, ERBE, Tübingen, Germany) and an argon plasma coagulation unit (APC300, ERBE) were used during the procedures. The STER procedures were primarily performed after endoscopic evaluation as follows (Figures 2 and 3): (1) Several milliliters of a mixture solution (100 mL saline + 2 mL indigo carmine + 1 mL epinephrine) were injected 3 cm to 5 cm proximal to the SMT with an injection needle (NM-4L-1, Olympus); (2) a longitudinal mucosal incision, transverse incision or inverted T incision was made with a triangular knife (KD-640L, Olympus) as the tunnel entrance; (3) a tunnel was created between the mucosal and MP layers with the triangular knife and the tunnel ended at 1 cm to 2 cm distal to the SMT; (4) an insulation-tip knife (KD611L, IT2, Olympus), a triangular knife, or a snare (ASM-1-S or ASJ-1-S, Cook, Limerick, Ireland) was used to resect the SMT after it was completely exposed; and (5) The incision was closed with clips (HX-610-135, Olympus) after examination of the tunnel.

STER procedures for SMTs located in the cardia were more challenging due to the need to create a tunnel from the esophagus, through the lower esophageal sphincter (LES), to the cardia. It was difficult to identify the direction of tunnel. Methylene blue or indigo carmine can be used to locate the tumor and guide the direction of the tunnel after endoscopic evaluation[29].

***Postoperative management and follow-up***

Patients were fasted for 2-3 d, followed by a liquid diet for 3 d, then they gradually returned to a normal diet within 2 wk after the STER procedures. Oral proton pump inhibitor (PPI) therapy was used for 4 ws, following 3 d of intravenous PPI treatment. Intravenous antibiotics were administered from the day STER was performed and were stopped after 2-3 d if no signs of infection were observed. Patients were closely monitored for any complications, such as subcutaneous emphysema, mediastinal emphysema, pneumothorax, pneumoperitoneum, fever, chest pain, abdominal pain, hematemesis, and hematochezia. If a patient suffered from severe chest and/or abdominal pain, a chest/abdominal X-ray or CT was performed.

Gastroscopy and/or EUS were recommended at 1, 3, 6 and 12 mo after the operation and then annuallythereafter. For patients who were diagnosed with GISTs, an additional contrast-enhanced CT scan was recommended every 3-6 mo for approximately 5 years.

***Outcome measurements***

The *en bloc* resection rate, complete resection rate, residual rate and recurrence rate were calculated to evaluate the effectiveness of STER, while the complication rate was noted to evaluate its safety.

Complete resection was defined as removal of the tumor *en bloc* with tumor free-lateral and basal margins upon pathologic examination. Residual tumor was defined as redetection of an SMT within 1.0 cm around the primary resected SMT less than 6 mo after STER, while recurrence was defined as redetection of a SMT within 1.0 cm around the primary resected lesion more than 6 mo after STER. Fever was diagnosed if the axillary temperature was > 38 °C. Tumor size was determined according to the longest diameter measured on the resected specimen. If the tumor was removed by piecemeal resection, it was reconstructed to evaluate its size. Accurate specimen size was not available for residual SMTs, and therefore, the size of those tumors was determined by EUS evaluation. Operation time was regarded as the period between submucosal injection and endoscopy withdrawal, while the hospital time began on the day of surgery. Subcutaneous emphysema, mediastinal emphysema, pneumothorax, and pneumoperitoneum were regarded as gas-related complications.

***Statistical analysis***

The analyses were performed with SPSS 22.0 software (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, United States). Parametric data, including the tumor size, operation time, hospital time, tunnel length, number of clips, medical cost and follow-up period, were expressed as the mean ± standard deviation (SD) or median with the range and were assessed by Student’s *t*-test or a nonparametric test. Nonparametric variables, such as sex, location, shape, *en bloc* resection rate and complete resection rate, were expressed as proportions and were assessed by the *χ*2 test or Fisher’s exact test. A *P*-value (two-tailed) of < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

**RESULTS**

From May 2012 to December 2017, 173 patients with GI SMTs originating from the MP layer underwent STER. After 8 patients were excluded, 165 patients were retrospectively enrolled, including 112 men and 53 women, with a mean age of 46.9 ± 10.8 years. The median size of tumor sample was 20.0 (range, 5.0-80.0mm). Of the 165 lesions, 11 were located in the upper esophagus (6.7%), 49 in the middle esophagus (29.7%), 46 in the lower esophagus (27.9%), and 59 in the cardia (35.7%). Irregular lesions accounted for 48.5% of all lesions. Pathological diagnosis revealed that there were 157 leiomyomas (95.2%), 3 GISTs (1.8%), 3 lipomas (1.8%), 1 schwannoma (0.6%), and 1 fibrous tumor (0.6%).The sizes of each of these 3 GISTs were 8.0 mm × 8.0 mm, 24.0 mm × 11.0 mm, and 25.2 mm × 13.2 mm, while their mitotic rates were no more than 5/50 HPF. The detailed characteristics of the patients and SMTs are summarized in Table 1.

***Effectiveness of STER***

*En bloc* resection was achieved in 128 of the 165 lesions treated, for which the the *en bloc* resection rate was 78.7%. The complete resection rate was 78.7%. Four SMTs were not resected completely due to their large size, deep invasion and/or proximity to the aortic arch, which resulted in a the residual rate of 2.4% (4/165). No recurrence was noted during follow-up. The median operation time was 46 min (range 10-221 min). The median hospital time was 7 d (range 4-18 d). The median length of the tunnel was 7 cm (range 5-14 cm). The median number of clips was 5 (range 3-22). Patients spent a median of 4957.72 USD (range 3160.63-12882.63USD). The effectiveness outcomes are shown in Table 2.

***Safety of STER***

All 35 patients experienced intraoperative and postoperative complications at a rate of 21.2% (35/165) (Table 3). The most common complications were fever (13/165), mucosal injury (12/165) and gas-related complications (10/165). No severe complications occurred, and all complications resolved without intervention or were treated conservatively without the need for surgery. One case of a large perforation of the MP layer occurred in a large lesion located in the cardia that deeply invaded the MP layer and adhered to the serosa. Clips were used to close the perforation after the resection of the mucosa near the perforation. The integrity of the mucosa was not maintained in that case.

***Comparison of STER for GI SMTs in different locations***

The patients were divided into 2 groups (esophagus group and cardia group) based on the location of the lesions. When the esophagus group was compared with the cardia group in terms of baseline characteristics (Table 4), SMTs located in the cardia appeared to be larger and were more likely to have an irregular shape than those located in the esophagus. No significant differences were observed in age or sex between patients in the two groups.

*En bloc* resection was achieved in 86 (81.1%) patients in the esophagus group and 42 (72.1%) in the cardia group, this difference was not statistically significant (*P =* 0.142). Two residual tumors were noted in both groups, but no recurrence was noted during follow-up. The comparison of effectiveness outcomes between the two groups is shown in Table 5. No significant differences were seen in operation time, hospital time, number of clips, or medical cost between the esophagus and cardia groups.

Procedure-related complications occurred in 21 (19.8%) patients in the esophagus group and 14 (23.7%) patients in the cardia group (Table 6). Differences in the complication rate between the two groups were not statistically significant (esophagus, 19.8%, cardia, 23.7%, *P =* 0.555). The most common complications in the esophagus group were gas-related complications (8/106) and fever (9/106), while the mucosal injury (9/59) was the most common complication in the cardia group.

**DISCUSSION**

SMTs have a broad differential diagnosis and are mainly divided into leiomyomas, GISTs, fibrous tumors, and schwannomas. With the development of imaging techniques, the detection rate of SMTs has been increasing and the incidence of SMTs has been reported to be 3%[7,30]. SMTs are covered by intact mucosa, which increases the difficulty of EUS-FNA and biopsy, especially when the tumors originate in the MP layer. Considering the limited diagnostic value and the challenge of preoperative tissue collection especially when SMTs are easily resected and the accuracy of biopsy seems low[7,11,18,31-34], preoperative EUS-FNA was not performed in our study. Although benign leiomyomas are the most common SMTs in the esophagus, GISTs with malignant potential are the second most common SMTs. Treatment of SMTs in esophagus is also important. Surgical resection and endoscopic resection are two methods that are used to resect SMTs. However, surgical resection, regardless of whether open surgery or video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery (VATS) is performed, seems to be more invasive than endoscopic resection[35-38] STER is regarded as the optimum method for resecting SMTs originating from the MP layer based on its advantages of a high *en bloc* resection rate and the ability to maintain the integrity of the mucosa[29,39-41]. The creation of a tunnel not only maintains the integrity of the mucosa, but it also decreases the likelihood of perforation, postoperative infection, fistula, and stricture[12]. Although several studies have reported results of STER for GI SMTs[18,29,40,42-49], few studies have enrolled a large population. Thus, the results are less convincing and further studies are necessary[27,28]. This study was designed to further evaluate the effectiveness and safety of STER for GI SMTs and to compare the outcomes of STER between esophageal and cardial SMTs.

In our current study, STER achieved an *en bloc* resection rate of 78.7% (128/165) for GI SMTs with an overall complication rate of 21.2% (35/165). Only 4 SMTs were not completely resected, which resulted in a residual rate of 2.4% (4/165), however, no recurrence was noted during follow-up. Large size, deep invasion and/or proximity to the aortic arch were risk factors for residual tumors. STER was not indicated for SMTs with a transverse diameter larger than 35.0 mm because the inner diameter of the tunnel was approximately 3.5 cm, however, the upper limit of the longest tumor diameter remains unknown. A 7 cm SMT was successfully resected by Chen *et al*[28] However, larger size is associated with a high risk of malignancy and may result in loss of endoscopic visualization. The *en bloc* resection rates of STER for esophageal SMTs and cardial SMTs were 81.1% (86/106) and 72.1% (42/59), respectively. The complication rates of STER for esophageal SMTs and cardial SMTs were19.8% (21/106) and 23.7% (14/59), respectively. No significant differences were observed in *en bloc* resection and complication rates between those two locations. The most common complications that occurred in the esophagus were gas-related complications and fever, while mucosal injury was the most common complication in the cardia. No severe complications that required surgical treatment or that led to death occurred in our study.

STER was effective not only for esophageal SMTs but also for cardial SMTs and had a high *en bloc* resection rate. *En bloc* resection rates in this studies demonstrated was slightly lower than that in previous studies which ranged from 83.3% to 100%[24]. We speculated that a snare was used to quickly resect the lesion after majority part of the SMT was exposed in some cases, which led to a high incidence of piecemeal resection[12,26]. Although STER for cardial SMTs was more challenging than that for esophageal SMTs, their *en bloc* resection rates were comparable even though cardial SMTs were larger and more irregular than esophageal SMTs. We speculate that there may be two reasons that explain these findings. First, the therapeutic outcomes of STER in different locations, including the esophagus, cardia, stomach and rectum have been reported to be good, and therefore, the difference between these two locations might be too small to show any difference. In our study, the *en bloc* resection rate in the esophagus group was higher than that of the cardia group, however, the difference was not significant. Second, the cardia group only contained 59 patients, which is relatively small. The operation times were also comparable. The creation of a tunnel during STER for cardial SMTs was more difficult than for esophageal SMTs and thus required more time. However, SMT exposure as well as the resection and incision closure accounted for the majority of the operation time, thus, no significant differences were observed between the two groups with respect to operation time.

The STER-related complication rate mainly ranges from 5% to 25% without no reported deaths, most of the complications reported are mild[14], which is in accordance with our results. A meta-analysis involving 12 studies including 397 patients and 430 lesions showed that the pooled complication rate of STER for GI SMTs was 21.5% (95%CI: 13.2-33.1%)[25]. Gas-related complications are regarded as the most common complication related to STER[28,35,45,46,48]. In our study, gas-related complications were the most common complications of STER for GI SMTs, with a complication rate of 9.7% (16/165). Gas-related complications were also the most common complications for esophageal SMTs, with a rate of 19.8% (19/106), which is consistent with previous studies. The pooled prevalence of gas-related symptoms was 14.8% (95%CI: 10.5%-20.5%) for subcutaneous emphysema and pneumomediastinum, 6.1% (95%CI: 4.0%-9.0%) for pneumothorax and 6.8% (95%CI: 4.7%-9.6%) for pneumoperitoneum, which were demonstrated in another meta-analysis[50].

The most common complications in patients with esophageal and cardial tumors were different in our study. The reasons for this were as follows: (1) The absence of a serous membrane in the esophagus makes it easier for gas to diffuse into the subcutis, mediastinum, thorax and abdomen, thus, gas-related complications were more prevalent in the esophagus group; (2) the MP layer is thicker in the cardia than in the esophagus, which decreases the likelihood and amount of gas effusion; and (3) the anatomic structure of the cardia makes the direction of the tunnel difficult to identify and the tunnel difficult to establish, therefore, the mucosa was at higher risk of injury when the tunnel was created.

The present study has are several limitations. First, it was designed as a single-center, retrospective study. Second, the accuracy of the origin of the SMTs from the MP layer of the SMTs was not considered in this study due to the difficulty of retrospective evaluation based on EUS images. Third, the number of patients in the cardia group was small. Fourth, no control groups were included. Thus, randomized controlled studies involving a large population are warranted to evaluate the long-term outcome of STER compared with that of other treatments, such as ESE and EFR, for SMTs originating from the MP layer.

In conclusion, STER is an effective and safe methodology for the resection of upper GI SMTs with an overall *en bloc* resection rate of 77.6% and a complication rate of 21.2%. Gas-related symptoms and fever were the most common complications in patients with esophageal SMTs, while submucosal injury was most common complication in patients with cardial SMTs. The effectiveness and safety of STER for tumors in the esophagus and cardia were comparable.

**ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS**

***Research background***

Submucosal tumors (SMTs) have a greater possibility of malignancy when they originate from the muscularis propria (MP) layer, have a large diameter, or are mesenchymal neoplasms. Without resection, it is difficult to obtain an accurate diagnosis of the subtypes of SMTs even with endoscopic ultrasound-guided fine needle aspiration and biopsy, which are regarded as the most reliable methods. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection (STER), which was inspired by digestive endoscopic tunnel technique, was reported for the resection of SMTs originating from the MP layer with the advantage to maintain the integrity of mucosa in 2012. As a minimally invasive produce, STER acts an important role in the treatment of SMTs.

***Research motivation***

Few studies describing STER for SMTs located in MP have enrolled large populations of greater than 100 cases. Studies enrolled large samples are needed. Although STER procedures for SMTs located in the cardia were regarded to be more challenging due to the need to create a tunnel from the esophagus, through the lower esophageal sphincter, to the cardia, no studies compared the effectiveness and safety of STER for SMTs located in different locations has been made.

***Research objectives***

In this retrospective study, we further evaluate the effectiveness and safety of STER for gastrointestinal (GI) SMTs originating from the MP layer in a large population and compare the feasibility of STER for resection of esophageal and cardial SMTs.

***Research methods***

From May 2012 to November 2017, 173 consecutive patients with upper GI SMTs of the MP layer underwent STER. Overall, 165 patients were included, and 8 were excluded. The *en bloc* resection rate, complete resection rate, residual rate and recurrence rate were calculated to evaluated the effectiveness of STER, and the complication rate was noted to evaluate its safety. Effectiveness and safety outcomes of STER were compared between esophageal and cardial SMTs.

***Research results***

En bloc resection was achieved in 128 of the 165 lesions treated with an *en bloc* resection rate of 78.7%. Four SMTs were not resected completely owing to large size, deep invasion and/or proximity to the aortic arch, leading to the residual rate of 2.4% (4/165). No recurrence was noted during follow-up. The complete resection rate was 78.7%. All of 35 patients had intraoperative and postoperative complications, with the rate of 21.2% (35/165). The most common complications were fever (13/165), mucosal injury (12/165) and gas-related complications (10/165). No severe complications occurred. *En bloc* resection was achieved in 86 (81.1%) patients in the esophagus group and 42 (72.1%) in the cardia group, there was no significant difference (*P =* 0.142). There was no significant difference in the complication rate between the two groups (esophagus, 19.8%, cardia, 23.7%, *P =* 0.555). The most common complications in the esophagus group were gas-related complications (8/106) and fever (9/106), while the mucosal injury (9/59) was the most common complication in the cardia group. However, the accurate origination from the MP layer of the SMTs was not taken into consideration in this study and the number of patients in the cardia group was small.

***Research conclusions***

STER is an effective and safetherapy for GI SMTs of the MP layer with an *en bloc* resection rate of 78.7% and a complication rate of 21.2%. No recurrence was noted during follow-up was observed during follow-up, even after piecemeal resection. Although STER for cardial SMTs was more challenging than that of esophageal SMTs, their *en bloc* resection rates were comparable even though cardial SMTs were larger and more irregular than esophageal SMTs. The most common complications in the esophagus group were gas-related complications and fever, while the mucosal injury was the most common complication in the cardia group.

***Research perspectives***

Although piecemeal resection may do not influence long-term outcomes, it affects pathological evaluation. Therefore, *en bloc* resection should be maintained. Randomized controlled studies involving a large population are warranted to evaluate the long-term outcome of STER compared with other treatments for SMTs originating from the MP layer, such as endoscopic submucosal excavation and endoscopic full-thickness resection.

**REFERENCES**

1 **Ponsaing LG**, Kiss K, Hansen MB. Classification of submucosal tumors in the gastrointestinal tract. *World J Gastroenterol* 2007; **13**: 3311-3315 [PMID: 17659669]

2 **Lee IL**, Lin PY, Tung SY, Shen CH, Wei KL, Wu CS. Endoscopic submucosal dissection for the treatment of intraluminal gastric subepithelial tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Endoscopy* 2006; **38**: 1024-1028 [PMID: 17058168 DOI: 10.1055/s-2006-944814]

3 **Otani Y**, Furukawa T, Yoshida M, Saikawa Y, Wada N, Ueda M, Kubota T, Mukai M, Kameyama K, Sugino Y, Kumai K, Kitajima M. Operative indications for relatively small (2-5 cm) gastrointestinal stromal tumor of the stomach based on analysis of 60 operated cases. *Surgery* 2006; **139**: 484-492 [PMID: 16627057 DOI: 10.1016/j.surg.2005.08.011]

4 **Gill KR**, Camellini L, Conigliaro R, Sassatelli R, Azzolini F, Messerotti A, Woodward TA, Wallace MB, Jamil LH, Raimondo M. The natural history of upper gastrointestinal subepithelial tumors: a multicenter endoscopic ultrasound survey. *J Clin Gastroenterol* 2009; **43**: 723-726 [PMID: 19238092 DOI: 10.1097/MCG.0b013e31818a8457]

5 **Connolly EM**, Gaffney E, Reynolds JV. Gastrointestinal stromal tumours. *Br J Surg* 2003; **90**: 1178-1186 [PMID: 14515284 DOI: 10.1002/bjs.4352]

6 **Polkowski M**, Butruk E. Submucosal lesions. *Gastrointest Endosc Clin N Am* 2005; **15**: 33-54, viii [PMID: 15555950 DOI: 10.1016/j.giec.2004.07.005]

7 **Nishida T**, Kawai N, Yamaguchi S, Nishida Y. Submucosal tumors: comprehensive guide for the diagnosis and therapy of gastrointestinal submucosal tumors. *Dig Endosc* 2013; **25**: 479-489 [PMID: 23902569 DOI: 10.1111/den.12149]

8 **Hoda KM**, Rodriguez SA, Faigel DO. EUS-guided sampling of suspected GI stromal tumors. *Gastrointest Endosc* 2009; **69**: 1218-1223 [PMID: 19394006 DOI: 10.1016/j.gie.2008.09.045]

9 **El Chafic AH**, Loren D, Siddiqui A, Mounzer R, Cosgrove N, Kowalski T. Comparison of FNA and fine-needle biopsy for EUS-guided sampling of suspected GI stromal tumors. *Gastrointest Endosc* 2017; **86**: 510-515 [PMID: 28131864 DOI: 10.1016/j.gie.2017.01.010]

10 **Polkowski M**, Bergman JJ. Endoscopic ultrasonography-guided biopsy for submucosal tumors: needless needling? *Endoscopy* 2010; **42**: 324-326 [PMID: 20354943 DOI: 10.1055/s-0029-1244070]

11 **Demetri GD**, von Mehren M, Antonescu CR, DeMatteo RP, Ganjoo KN, Maki RG, Pisters PW, Raut CP, Riedel RF, Schuetze S, Sundar HM, Trent JC, Wayne JD. NCCN Task Force report: update on the management of patients with gastrointestinal stromal tumors. *J Natl Compr Canc Netw* 2010; **8** Suppl 2: S1-S41; quiz S42-S44 [PMID: 20457867]

12 **Du C**, Ma L, Chai N, Gao Y, Niu X, Zhai Y, Li Z, Meng J, Tang P, Linghu E. Factors affecting the effectiveness and safety of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for esophageal submucosal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Surg Endosc* 2018; **32**: 1255-1264 [PMID: 28842802 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-017-5800-x]

13 **Kim GH**. Endoscopic resection of subepithelial tumors. *Clin Endosc* 2012; **45**: 240-244 [PMID: 22977810 DOI: 10.5946/ce.2012.45.3.240]

14 **Du C**, Linghu E. Submucosal Tunneling Endoscopic Resection for the Treatment of Gastrointestinal Submucosal Tumors Originating from the Muscularis Propria Layer. *J Gastrointest Surg* 2017; **21**: 2100-2109 [PMID: 29043576 DOI: 10.1007/s11605-017-3579-7]

15 **Linghu EQ**. Endoscopic resection for gastrointestinal pre-cancerous lesion and early cancer. Electronic Image Press of the Chinese Medical Association 2009

16 **Endoscopy CSoD**. Consensus on Digestive Endoscopic Tunnel Technique. *Chinese Journal of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy* (Eletronic Edition) 2017; **4**: 145-158

17 **Inoue H**, Minami H, Kobayashi Y, Sato Y, Kaga M, Suzuki M, Satodate H, Odaka N, Itoh H, Kudo S. Peroral endoscopic myotomy (POEM) for esophageal achalasia. *Endoscopy* 2010; **42**: 265-271 [PMID: 20354937 DOI: 10.1055/s-0029-1244080]

18 **Xu MD**, Cai MY, Zhou PH, Qin XY, Zhong YS, Chen WF, Hu JW, Zhang YQ, Ma LL, Qin WZ, Yao LQ. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection: a new technique for treating upper GI submucosal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer (with videos). *Gastrointest Endosc* 2012; **75**: 195-199 [PMID: 22056087 DOI: 10.1016/j.gie.2011.08.018]

19 **Reinehr R**. [Endoscopic submucosal excavation (ESE) is a safe and useful technique for endoscopic removal of submucosal tumors of the stomach and the esophagus in selected cases]. *Z Gastroenterol* 2015; **53**: 573-578 [PMID: 26075368 DOI: 10.1055/s-0034-1399384]

20 **Stavropoulos SN**, Modayil R, Friedel D, Brathwaite CE. Endoscopic full-thickness resection for GI stromal tumors. *Gastrointest Endosc* 2014; **80**: 334-335 [PMID: 25034842 DOI: 10.1016/j.gie.2014.05.300]

21 **Tan Y**, Tang X, Guo T, Peng D, Tang Y, Duan T, Wang X, Lv L, Huo J, Liu D. Comparison between submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection and endoscopic full-thickness resection for gastric stromal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Surg Endosc* 2017; **31**: 3376-3382 [PMID: 27864722 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-016-5350-7]

22 **Ye LP**, Zhang Y, Wang CY, He SQ, Feng XJ, Zhang JS, Ding JX. Endoscopic submucosal enucleation for gastric submucosal tumors originated from muscularis propria layer: clinical analysis of 116 case. *Zhonghua Wei Chang Wai Ke Za Zhi* 2012; **15**: 1175-1177 [PMID: 23172533]

23 **Guo H**, Sheng JQ, Wang HH, Jin P, Zhao XJ, Li N, Wang X, Li AQ, Yu DL, Xie H, Wang XW, Tang S. The diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal submucosal tumor under endoscopy. *Chinese Journal of Gastroenterology of Hepatology* 2013; **22**: 872-876

24 **Liu BR**, Song JT. Submucosal Tunneling Endoscopic Resection (STER) and Other Novel Applications of Submucosal Tunneling in Humans. *Gastrointest Endosc Clin N Am* 2016; **26**: 271-282 [PMID: 27036897 DOI: 10.1016/j.giec.2015.12.003]

25 **Song S**, Wang X, Zhang S, Li Y, Zhang X, Chu X. Efficacy and complications of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for upper gastrointestinal submucosal tumors and exploration for influencing factors. *Z Gastroenterol* 2018; **56**: 365-373 [PMID: 29346827 DOI: 10.1055/s-0043-123765]

26 **Li Z**, Gao Y, Chai N, Xiong Y, Ma L, Zhang W, Du C, Linghu E. Effect of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for submucosal tumors at esophagogastric junction and risk factors for failure of en bloc resection. *Surg Endosc* 2018; **32**: 1326-1335 [PMID: 28812158 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-017-5810-8]

27 **Chen T**, Zhou PH, Chu Y, Zhang YQ, Chen WF, Ji Y, Yao LQ, Xu MD. Long-term Outcomes of Submucosal Tunneling Endoscopic Resection for Upper Gastrointestinal Submucosal Tumors. *Ann Surg* 2017; **265**: 363-369 [PMID: 28059965 DOI: 10.1097/SLA.0000000000001650]

28 **Chen T**, Zhang C, Yao LQ, Zhou PH, Zhong YS, Zhang YQ, Chen WF, Li QL, Cai MY, Chu Y, Xu MD. Management of the complications of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for upper gastrointestinal submucosal tumors. *Endoscopy* 2016; **48**: 149-155 [PMID: 26517846 DOI: 10.1055/s-0034-1393244]

29 **Mao XL**, Ye LP, Zheng HH, Zhou XB, Zhu LH, Zhang Y. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection using methylene-blue guidance for cardial subepithelial tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Dis Esophagus* 2017; **30**: 1-7 [PMID: 27671744 DOI: 10.1111/dote.12536]

30 **Hedenbro JL**, Ekelund M, Wetterberg P. Endoscopic diagnosis of submucosal gastric lesions. The results after routine endoscopy. *Surg Endosc* 1991; **5**: 20-23 [PMID: 1871670]

31 **American Gastroenterological Association Institute.**. American Gastroenterological Association Institute medical position statement on the management of gastric subepithelial masses. *Gastroenterology* 2006; **130**: 2215-2216 [PMID: 16762643 DOI: 10.1053/j.gastro.2006.04.032]

32 **Levy MJ**, Jondal ML, Clain J, Wiersema MJ. Preliminary experience with an EUS-guided trucut biopsy needle compared with EUS-guided FNA. *Gastrointest Endosc* 2003; **57**: 101-106 [PMID: 12518144 DOI: 10.1067/mge.2003.49]

33 **Williams DB**, Sahai AV, Aabakken L, Penman ID, van Velse A, Webb J, Wilson M, Hoffman BJ, Hawes RH. Endoscopic ultrasound guided fine needle aspiration biopsy: a large single centre experience. *Gut* 1999; **44**: 720-726 [PMID: 10205212]

34 **Cantor MJ**, Davila RE, Faigel DO. Yield of tissue sampling for subepithelial lesions evaluated by EUS: a comparison between forceps biopsies and endoscopic submucosal resection. *Gastrointest Endosc* 2006; **64**: 29-34 [PMID: 16813799 DOI: 10.1016/j.gie.2006.02.027]

35 **Tan Y**, Lv L, Duan T, Zhou J, Peng D, Tang Y, Liu D. Comparison between submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection and video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery for large esophageal leiomyoma originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Surg Endosc* 2016; **30**: 3121-3127 [PMID: 26487221 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-015-4567-1]

36 **Li QY**, Meng Y, Xu YY, Zhang Q, Cai JQ, Zheng HX, Qing HT, Huang SL, Han ZL, Li AM, Huang Y, Zhang YL, Zhi FC, Cai RJ, Li Y, Gong W, Liu SD. Comparison of endoscopic submucosal tunneling dissection and thoracoscopic enucleation for the treatment of esophageal submucosal tumors. *Gastrointest Endosc* 2017; **86**: 485-491 [PMID: 27899323 DOI: 10.1016/j.gie.2016.11.023]

37 **Meng FS**, Zhang ZH, Hong YY, Li DJ, Lin JQ, Chen X, Ji F. Comparison of endoscopic submucosal dissection and surgery for the treatment of gastric submucosal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer: a single-center study (with video). *Surg Endosc* 2016; **30**: 5099-5107 [PMID: 27005293 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-016-4860-7]

38 **Chen T**, Lin ZW, Zhang YQ, Chen WF, Zhong YS, Wang Q, Yao LQ, Zhou PH, Xu MD. Submucosal Tunneling Endoscopic Resection vs Thoracoscopic Enucleation for Large Submucosal Tumors in the Esophagus and the Esophagogastric Junction. *J Am Coll Surg* 2017; **225**: 806-816 [PMID: 28923691 DOI: 10.1016/j.jamcollsurg.2017.09.002]

39 **Lu J**, Jiao T, Zheng M, Lu X. Endoscopic resection of submucosal tumors in muscularis propria: the choice between direct excavation and tunneling resection. *Surg Endosc* 2014; **28**: 3401-3407 [PMID: 24986008 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-014-3610-y]

40 **Zhou DJ**, Dai ZB, Wells MM, Yu DL, Zhang J, Zhang L. Submucosal tunneling and endoscopic resection of submucosal tumors at the esophagogastric junction. *World J Gastroenterol* 2015; **21**: 578-583 [PMID: 25593479 DOI: 10.3748/wjg.v21.i2.578]

41 **Duan TY**, Tan YY, Wang XH, Lv L, Liu DL. A comparison of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection and endoscopic full-thickness resection for gastric fundus submucosal tumors. *Rev Esp Enferm Dig* 2018; **110**: 160-165 [PMID: 29284271 DOI: 10.17235/reed.2017.4699/2016]

42 **Liu BR**, Song JT, Kong LJ, Pei FH, Wang XH, Du YJ. Tunneling endoscopic muscularis dissection for subepithelial tumors originating from the muscularis propria of the esophagus and gastric cardia. *Surg Endosc* 2013; **27**: 4354-4359 [PMID: 23765425 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-013-3023-3]

43 **Li B**, Liu J, Lu Y, Hao J, Liu H, Jiang J, Jiang Y, Qin C, Xu H. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for tumors of the esophagogastric junction. *Minim Invasive Ther Allied Technol* 2016; **25**: 141-147 [PMID: 27049345 DOI: 10.3109/13645706.2016.1167085]

44 **Yang XZ**, Dai WJ, Wang HG, Wang Q, Sun SH, Zhou JF, Ma G, Zhang J. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for esophageal submucosal tumors. *World Chinese Journal of Digestology* 2014; **22**: 5310 [DOI: 10.11569/wcjd.v22.i34.5310]

45 **Li QL**, Chen WF, Zhang C, Hu JW, Zhou PH, Zhang YQ, Zhong YS, Yao LQ, Xu MD. Clinical impact of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for the treatment of gastric submucosal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer (with video). *Surg Endosc* 2015; **29**: 3640-3646 [PMID: 25740640 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-015-4120-2]

46 **Wang H**, Tan Y, Zhou Y, Wang Y, Li C, Zhou J, Duan T, Zhang J, Liu D. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for upper gastrointestinal submucosal tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Eur J Gastroenterol Hepatol* 2015; **27**: 776-780 [PMID: 25966671 DOI: 10.1097/MEG.0000000000000394]

47 **Ye LP**, Zhang Y, Mao XL, Zhu LH, Zhou X, Chen JY. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for small upper gastrointestinal subepithelial tumors originating from the muscularis propria layer. *Surg Endosc* 2014; **28**: 524-530 [PMID: 24013472 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-013-3197-8]

48 **Zhang C**, Hu JW, Chen T, Zhou PH, Zhong YS, Zhang YQ, Chen WF, Li QL, Yao LQ, Xu MD. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for upper gastrointestinal multiple submucosal tumors originating from the muscular propria layer: a feasibility study. *Indian J Cancer* 2015; **51** Suppl 2: e52-e55 [PMID: 25712845 DOI: 10.4103/0019-509X.151989]

49 **Wang XY**, Xu MD, Yao LQ, Zhou PH, Pleskow D, Li QL, Zhang YQ, Chen WF, Zhong YS. Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for submucosal tumors of the esophagogastric junction originating from the muscularis propria layer: a feasibility study (with videos). *Surg Endosc* 2014; **28**: 1971-1977 [PMID: 24515260 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-014-3420-2]

50 **Lv XH**, Wang CH, Xie Y. Efficacy and safety of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for upper gastrointestinal submucosal tumors: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Surg Endosc* 2017; **31**: 49-63 [PMID: 27287907 DOI: 10.1007/s00464-016-4978-7]

**P-Reviewer:** Harada H, Ishida T, Kobara H, Yamamoto K **S-Editor:** Wang XJ **L-Editor:** **E-Editor:**

**Specialty type:** Gastroenterology and hepatology

**Country of origin:** China

**Peer-review report classification**

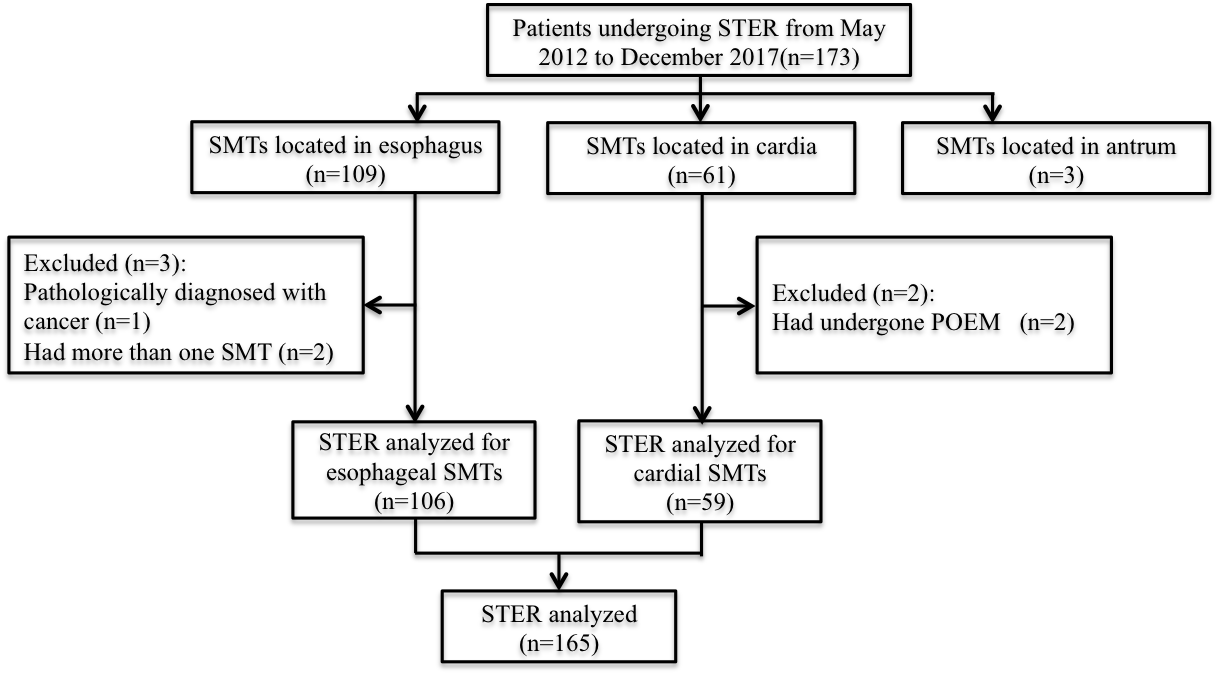
Grade A (Excellent): 0

Grade B (Very good): B, B

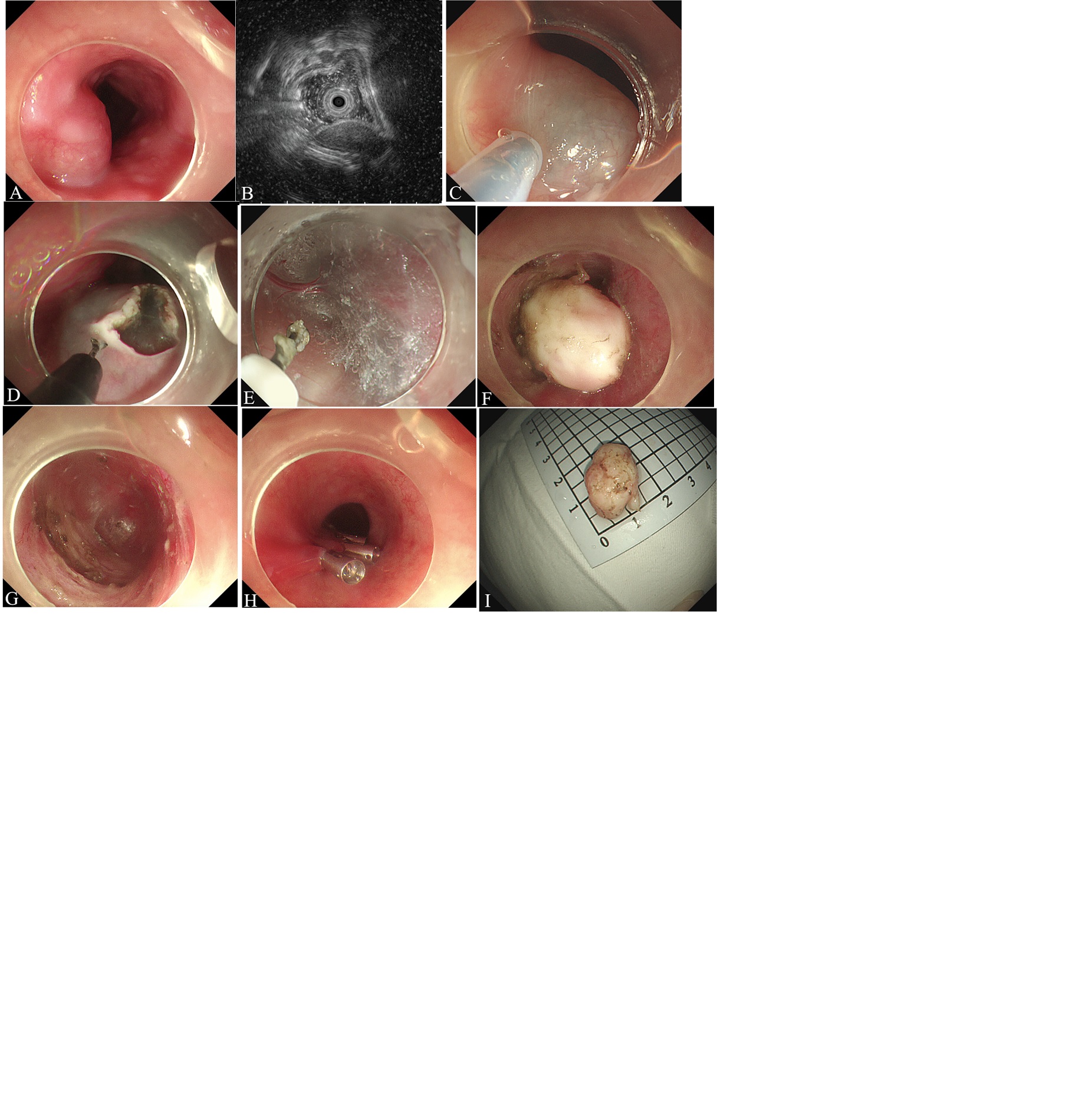
Grade C (Good): C

Grade D (Fair): D

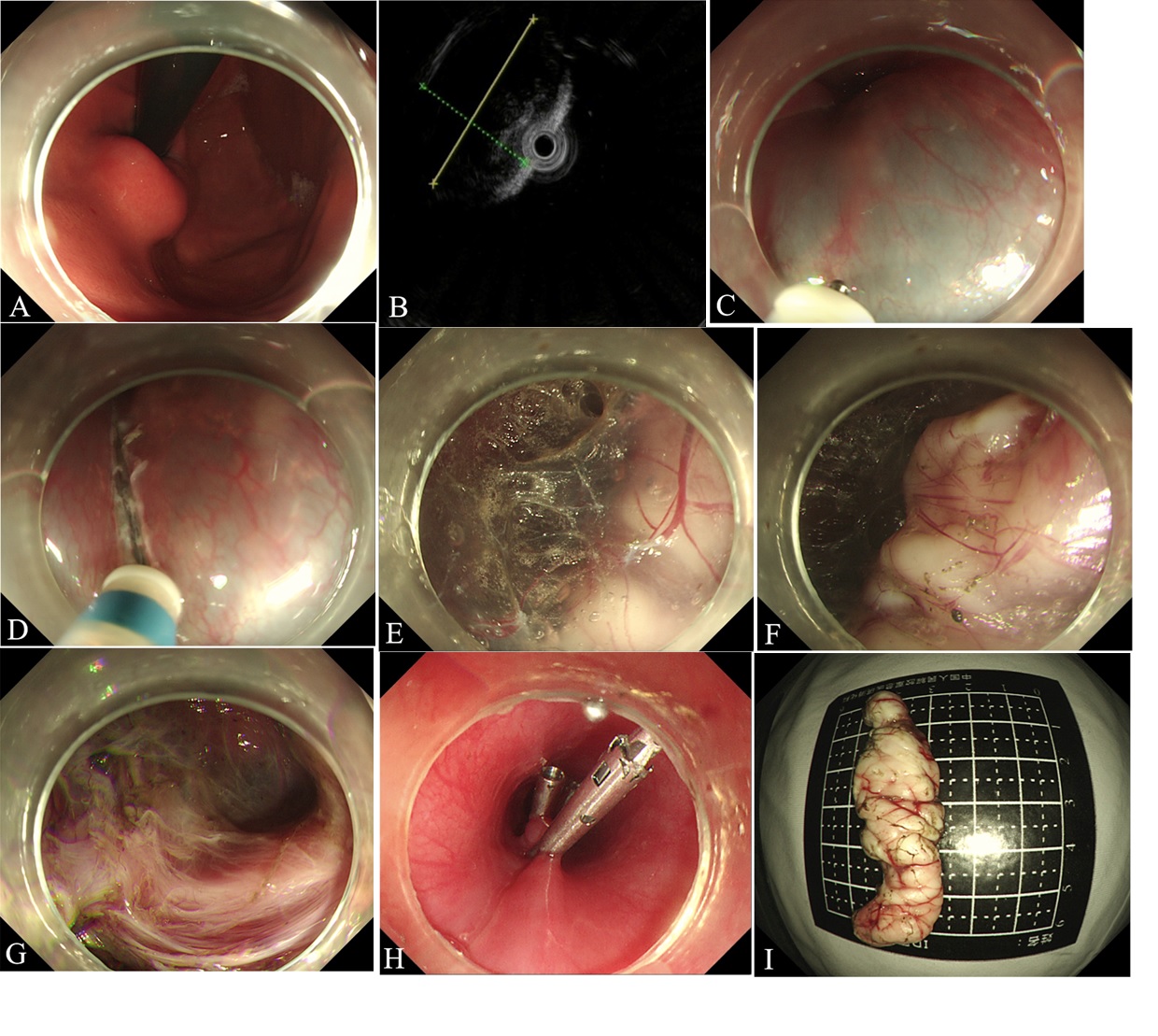
Grade E (Poor): 0



**Figure 1 Study flowchart.**

****

**Figure 2 Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for a submucosal tumor originating from the muscularis propria layer in the esophagus.** A: Endoscopic view of a submucosal tumor (SMT) in the esophagus; B: Endoscopic ultrasound view of the same SMT, showing that lesion originates from the muscularis propria (MP) layer; C: Submucosal injection at 5 cm proximal to the SMT; D: An inverted T mucosal incision; E: Establishment of a submucosal tunnel between the mucosal and MP layers; F: Exposure of the SMT; G: The tunnel after the resection of the tumor; H: Closure of the mucosal incision site with clips; I: The resected specimen.



**Figure 3 Submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for a submucosal tumor originating from the muscularis propria layer in the cardia.** A: Endoscopic view of a submucosal tumor (SMT) in the cardia; B: endoscopic ultrasound view of the same SMT; C: Submucosal injection at 5 cm proximal to the SMT; D: A longitudinal mucosal incision; E: Establishment of a submucosal tunnel between the mucosal and muscularis propria layers; F: Exposure of the SMT; G: The tunnel after the resection of the tumor; H: Closure of the mucosal incision site with clips; I: The resected specimen.

**Table 1 Detailed characteristic of the 165 enrolled patients and submucosal tumors *n* (%)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcomes** | **Results (*n* = 165)** |
| Age, mean ± SD (yr) | 46.9 (10.8) |
| Sex |  |
| Men | 112 (67.9) |
| Women | 53 (32.1) |
| Tumor size; median (range, mm) | 20.0 (5.0-80.0) |
| Tumor location |  |
| Upper esophagus | 11 (6.7) |
| Middle esophagus | 49 (29.7) |
| Lower esophagus | 46 (27.9) |
| Cardia | 59 (35.7) |
| Tumor shape |  |
| Regular | 85 (51.5) |
| Irregular | 80 (48.5) |
| Pathological diagnosis |  |
| Leiomyomas | 157 (95.2) |
| GISTs | 3 (1.8) |
| Lipomas | 3 (1.8) |
| Schwannomas | 1 (0.6) |
| Fibrous tumor | 1 (0.6) |

GISTs: Gastrointestinal stromal tumors.

**Table 2 Effective outcomes of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for gastrointestinal submucosal tumors *n* (%)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Characteristics** | **Results (*n* = 165)** |
| *En bloc* resection | 128 (77.6) |
| Complete resection | 128 (77.6) |
| Residual | 4 (2.4) |
| Recurrence | 0 |
| Operation time, median (range, min) | 46 (10-221) |
| Hospital time, median (range, d) | 7 (4-18) |
| Length of tunnel, median (range, cm) | 7 (5-14) |
| Clips, median (range) | 5 (3-22) |
| Cost, median (range, USD) | 4957.72 (3160.63-12882.63) |

**Table 3 Safe outcomes of submucosal tunneling endoscopic resection for gastrointestinal submucosal tumors**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Complications** | **Number of patients** |
| Gas-related complications | 6 |
| Moderate fever | 7 |
| Mucosal injury | 10 |
| Chest or abdominal pain | 4 |
| Gas-related complications and mucosal injury | 1 |
| Gas-related complications and moderate fever | 3 |
| Moderate fever and chest pain | 1 |
| Moderate fever and pleural effusion | 1 |
| Moderate fever and mucosal injury | 1 |
| Big perforation of the MP layer | 1 |
| Total | 35 |

**Table 4 Comparison of baseline characteristics of patients and submucosal tumors between esophagus group and cardia group *n* (%)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Characteristics** | **Esophagus group (*n* = 106)** | **Cardia group (*n* = 59)** | ***P* value** |
| Age, mean ± SD (yr) | 45.7 (10.5) | 48.2 (10.9) | 0.053 |
| Sex |  |  | 0.159 |
| Men | 76 | 36 |  |
| Women | 30 | 23 |  |
| Tumor size, median (range, mm) | 16.5 (5.0-55.0) | 25.0 (6.0-80.0) | 0.005a |
| Tumor shape |  |  | 0.000a |
| Regular | 66 | 19 |  |
| Irregular | 40 | 40 |  |
| Pathological diagnosis |  |  | NA |
| Leiomyomas | 102 | 55 |  |
| GISTs | 1 | 2 |  |
| Lipomas | 1 | 2 |  |
| Schwannomas | 1 | 0 |  |
| Fibrous tumor | 1 | 0 |  |

a*P* < 0.05, there is statistical significance between each other.GISTs: Gastrointestinal stromal tumors; NA: Not available.

**Table 5 Comparison of effective outcomes between esophagus group and cardia group *n* (%)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Characteristics** | **Esophagus group (*n* = 106)** | **Cardia group (*n* = 59)** | ***P* value** |
| *En bloc* resection | 86 (81.1) | 42 (71.2) | 0.142 |
| Complete resection | 86 (81.1) | 42 (71.2) | 0.142 |
| Residual | 2 (1.9) | 2 (3.4) | 0.941 |
| Recurrence | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | NA |
| Operation time, median (range, min) | 46 (12-169) | 50 (10-221) | 0.232 |
| Hospital time, median (range, d) | 7 (4-18) | 7 (4-16) | 0.261 |
| Clips; median (range) | 5 (3-22) | 5 (3-16) | 0.980 |
| Cost; median (range, USD) | 4974.48 (3160.63-12882.63) | 4926.60 (3276.43-8718.35) | 0.333 |

NA: Not available.

**Table 6 Comparison of safe outcomes between esophagus group and cardia group**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Complications** | **Esophagus group (*n* = 106)** | **Cardia group (*n* = 59)** |
| Gas-related complications | 5 | 1 |
| Moderate fever | 5 | 2 |
| Mucosal injury | 3 | 7 |
| Chest or abdominal pain | 3 | 1 |
| Gas-related complications and mucosal injury | 1 | 0 |
| Gas-related complications and moderate fever | 2 | 1 |
| Moderate fever and chest pain | 1 | 0 |
| Moderate fever and pleural effusion | 1 | 0 |
| Moderate fever and mucosal injury | 0 | 1 |
| Big perforation of the MP layer | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 21 | 14 |

MP: Muscularis propria.