Retightening Revision of a Previous MACS Lift Meloplasty

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The MACS lift, popularized over the past few years by Tonnard and Verpaele, involves a mini form of face-lifting with circular plication of the submucosal aponeurotic system (SMAS) followed by skin excision and trimming [1]. In their initial series, Tonnard et al. [1] described using 2/0 Prolene sutures to plicate the SMAS layer. Subsequently, their technique evolved to the use of absorbable polydioxanone (PDS) sutures. This was prompted in part by problems with palpable knots when Prolene was used [2].

We have been performing MACS lifts in our practice for the past 6 years and also had moved toward the use of absorbable PDS sutures. However, in revisiting one of our initial MACS lift patients from 6 years previously for a revision, it became apparent that a significant benefit may be obtained by using nonabsorbable sutures, which we had not previously considered. In this case, after a small skin incision was made, the previously placed suture loops were found and re-tensioned via taking the loop and suturing it into a more superior position. This created new tension on the loop and re-tensioned the SMAS layer. By doing this we were able to achieve a good result with a much smaller procedure as we retightened the loops and then through minimal skin dissection trimmed some skin in the old scar.

This procedure allows us effectively to retighten and re-tension the MACS lift, at least once and possibly even twice after the initial surgery. However, it requires that the MACS circular sutures be blue or black nonabsorbable suture such as Prolene or nylon. In the described case, we had in fact used 2/0 Prolene sutures as initially described by Tonnard et al. [1]. This is a very simple way of improving the surgery and giving the MACS lift further longevity.

The senior author has now gone back to using nonabsorbable sutures for the MACS lift. We have not noted any significant problem with palpable knots as a result of this change but do make a point of burying the knots deeply.

References

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