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COMPARISON OF ORAL MUCOSAL GRAFTS AND PLAIN FASCIA LATA GRAFTS IN RECONSTRUCTION OF LOWER EYELID CONJUNCTIVA: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN THE RABBIT

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Abstract: Eyelid defects are usually seen after tumor resection, trauma or burns. For the treatment of skin, tars and conjunctival defects, different tissues are planned depend on anatomic situation of the eyelid. Conjunctival defects are usually repaired with mucosa but because of tickness and contractibility mucosal grafts, gaining of functional and cosmetic results are fairly difficult. In addition, bulbar conjunctival irritation and infection risk obligate to investigate alternative techniques. For this aim, in the recent years amniotic membrane grafts and cultured conjunctival tissue have been used.

For years, various types of fascial flaps have been used in clinical practice for reconstruction of oral, esophageal and urethral defects. It was considered that plain fascial tissue can be a good basal membrane and can provide good epithelization in conjunctiva in this study.

In this study, 10 New Zeland White adult rabbits were used. Both lower eyelid conjunctivas of the rabbits were resected from the free tarsal margin and the fornix by leaving 1-2 mm conjunctival tissue. While one of these defects was repaired using oral mucosa, the other defect was repaired using plain fascia lata graft. Findings were evaluated in the 7th, 14th, 21st, 30th and 45th days clinically and histopathologically.

As a result of the study, plain fascia graft was founded more superior than mucosa and provided a good epithelization as a basal membrane for corneal epithelium. Obtained cosmetic and functional result was evaluated well.

It is considered that plain fascial grafts can be a good alternative to conventional mucosal grafts for the repair of the eyelid conjunctiva.