

Different Modalities in Management of Splenic Trauma

Ahmad M. Atiya MD and Emad M. El Sageer MD

Department of General Surgery, El-Minia Faculty of Medicine

Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study is to evaluate the predictors of outcome of both operative and non-operative splenic conservation in blunt abdominal trauma. **Patients and methods:** 20 patients with splenic trauma from December 2014 to November 2016. Patients were classified into two groups either Non – operative (conservative), or Operative (surgical). Informed consent was taken from all patients. **Results:** Twenty patients were included in this study and were classified according to the modalities of treatment into 2 main groups: conservative (non- operative) group were 14 cases and surgical (operative) group were 6 cases. Conservative group include 3 male and 1 female, while surgical group include 4 male and 2 female. In the conservative group, postoperative peri-splenic abscess was detected in two cases in which sonar guided drainage was successful. While in the surgical group, left sub-phrenic abscess was detected in one case in which sonar guided drainage was successful. And seroma of the exploratory wound was detected in one case in which antibiotics & repeated dressings was successful. 1 cases died in surgical group intra operative due to massive haemorrhage while no mortality in conservative group. **Conclusion:** Non operative management for blunt splenic trauma in hemodynamically stable patients is safe, effective and associated with, low morbidity and no mortality especially in grade I-II and III with inferior results in grade V. However, non-operative management should be practiced in hospitals where an efficient ICU is available.

Key Words: Management, Spleen, Trauma

Introduction

Blunt abdominal trauma is more frequently encountered in the emergency department than penetrating one; usually result from motor vehicle collision⁽¹⁾. Blunt trauma to the abdomen can cause severe injury especially to solid abdominal organs⁽²⁾. The spleen and liver is the most commonly injured organs after blunt abdominal trauma and its management has been a topic for discussion over the past decade, small and large intestines are the next most injured⁽³⁾.

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of injury to the spleen with pedestrian or bicycle accidents, falls and blunt trauma induced by physical assaults or sports [eg; boxing] as additional common causes. The anatomy of the spleen plays an important role in its pattern of injury, attached in place by its suspensory ligaments and partially protected by the lower costal margin, the spleen is susceptible to decelerating injury in motor vehicle accidents, puncture or laceration injury when lower ribs are fractured. In motor vehicle accidents, lateral impact seems to

be an additional risk factor for splenic involvement, with the person seated closer to the side of collision placed at greater risk⁽⁴⁾.

Complications of post-splenectomy, especially intra-abdominal hemorrhage can be fatal, with delayed or inadequate treatment having a high mortality rate and the recognition of the fundamental role of the spleen in the immune response has led to greater efforts to preserve the spleen after injury⁽⁵⁾.

Until recently, the accepted treatment for splenic trauma, even for minor injuries, used to be splenectomy. This aggressive approach was based on the belief that, in adulthood, the spleen does not contribute any major function and conservative treatment was associated with potential life-threatening hemorrhage. With increasing recognition of the spleen's role in immunological function and awareness of overwhelming post-splenectomy sepsis (OPSI), non-operative management of hemodynamically stable patients with blunt

splenic injury has become the standard of care in pediatric and adult populations. Successful outcome following NOM is reported as up to 97% of patients regardless of the grade of splenic injury⁽¹⁾.

However, this changed policy towards splenic conservation requires careful risk-benefit analysis in the face of potentially life-threatening hemorrhage from delayed splenic rupture and the possibility of transfusion-induced viral Infections.

Furthermore, the increasing availability of reliable and good quality radiological imaging including ultrasound, computerized tomography (CT) scanning, and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) have greatly improved the information available with regard to the nature of the splenic injury and this may well help to identify the suitable patients for conservative management but at the expense of patient radiation⁽²⁾.

In order for Nonoperative treatment (NOT) of splenic injuries to be the standard goal of therapy in hemodynamically stable patients, it is necessary to have an accurate knowledge of patient selection criteria for Nonoperative management, as well as a precise assessment of the factors precluding conservative therapy. This becomes tangible due to diagnostic and therapeutic angiography addition⁽³⁾.

Knowing all these factors set the trend in splenectomy-conservative therapy debate (non-operative management, conservative surgery, and spleen auto transplant); it is currently considered that traumatic splenic injury is no longer an absolute indication for splenectomy, thus a proper reviewing of indications for emergency surgery in traumatic hemoperitoneum is needed⁽⁴⁾.

Controversy exists about how to appropriately select patients for non-operative treatment since bleeding from splenic injuries can incur significant morbidity and mortality^(1,2).

Patients and Methods

This study was conducted at the casualty Unit of Minia University Hospital, and

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included 20 patients with splenic trauma from December 2014 to November 2015. All patients were subjected to the primary survey provides the initial opportunity for evaluating and stabilizing a trauma patient. During the survey, the ABCDEs of trauma care are addressed. Secondary survey the patient is assessed systematically. Investigations were done as Plain X-ray (chest and abdomen), Abdominal u/s which is the routine investigation for all cases, to detect hemoperitoneum, Computerized tomography (C.T) in certain selected hemodynamically stable cases to determine hemoperitoneum, site & grading of splenic trauma according to AAST criteria for splenic Injury Scale. Laboratory investigations were done as Hb and serial hematocrite value, Prothrombin time & concentration, TLC and other investigations according to the presence of any associated co morbidity or as medical consultation needed.

We classified our patients into two groups either Non – operative (conservative), or Operative (surgical). The criteria for conservative management were hemodynamically stable patient or with correct response to plasma volume expansion, absence of signs of diffuse peritonitis on physical examination, transfusion requirements related to splenic injuries of less than 2-3 units of red blood cell concentrates (packed RBCs) and No suspicion of associated abdominal injuries and grade I, II & III splenic injury on imaging tests.

Criteria for discontinuing non operative management were Increasing abdominal pain, tenderness, and onset of diffuse peritonitis, more than 2-4 units packed RBC transfusion in the first 24-48 hours of observation, especially in the absence of orthopedic injuries, expansion of sub capsular splenic hematoma on a follow up CT and development of a symptomatic perisplenic fluid collection or hematoma on a follow up sonar.

Criteria for immediate operation were haemodynamic instability on admission. (All patients with systolic arterial blood

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pressure (SAP) lower than 90 mmHg on admission in the emergency department and were unresponsive to fast infusion of 2 liters of crystalloid solution and those who, after initial stabilization, developed low SAP lower than 90 mmHg were considered to be in a haemodynamically unstable condition), recurrence of instability after stabilization, peritoneal signs on physical examination.

Patients who planned for Conservative measures were put on absolute bed rest for 48- 72 hrs in ICU, monitoring (every 1/2hr in first 4hr, every 1hr in 2nd 4hr and 1hr for the resting 24hr) for Pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate and temperature chart, Serial physical examinations are mandatory to detect changes in tenderness or the onset of new peritoneal signs in patients who are awake and alert, hemodynamic monitoring (serial hemo-globin, hematocrite value and prothrombin concentration) every 1/2hr in first 24hr and every day in the period of hospital stay, Serial follow up U/S every 1hr in first 1/2hr, every 4hr in the 2nd 1/2hr and every day in the period of hospital stay and abdominal C.T in the next day after being stable (excludes associated abdominal injuries & detects site, extent & grade of splenic injury according to AAST splenic Injury Scale).

Follow up in our clinic for 4-6 weeks to detect any complication.

Assessment of the injury was done for patients who were subjected to surgery; If the injury is superficial (II and III) suture splenorrhaphy was done as fig (1), If the injury is deep or there is an avulsed part of the spleen (IV and V) splenectomy was done as fig (2). Tubal drains were put in the splenic bed and in the pelvis.

Patients were admitted to ICU post-operatively until stabilization of their general condition then transferred to the surgical ward.

Post-operative follow up include close monitoring of Pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate and temperature chart every 1/2hr in the first of 4hr, every 1hr in 2nd 4hr and every 1hr in the resting 24hr, drains: every 1hr in first 4hr then every 1hr in the resting 24hr if there is blood collected >100cc per hr----the abdomen was re-explored. Laboratory investigation including: coagulation profile, renal function, CBC, blood glucose level and electrolytes. Imaging investigation including: postoperative U/S.

Follow up after discharge in outpatient clinic was by imaging (U/S) For 4 weeks to detect any complication as abscess formation, delayed rupture spleen after 2 weeks or wound problems.

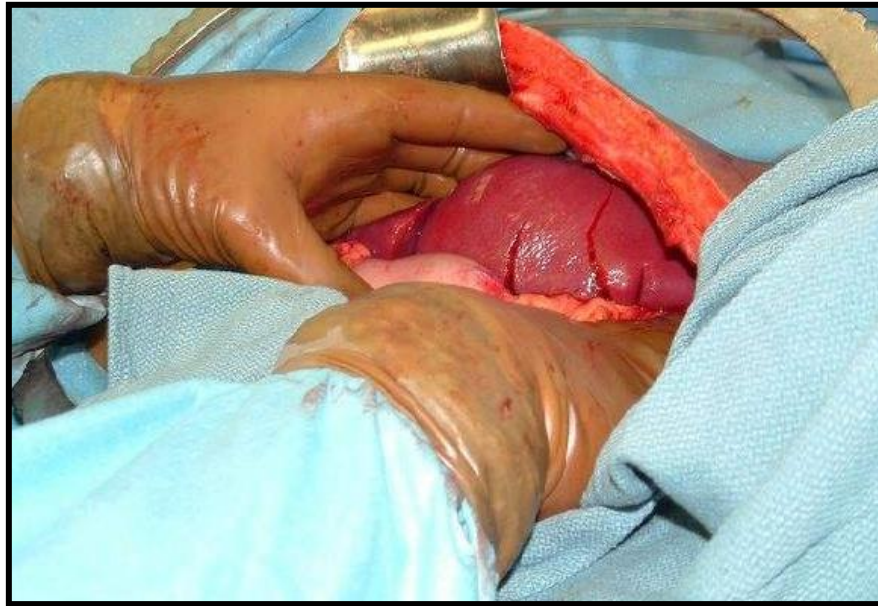


Figure 1: Exploration reveals small superficial tear in spleen. Suture splenorrhaphy was done.



Figure 2: Exploration reveals ruptured sub capsular splenic hematoma. Splenectomy was done.

Results

Twenty patients were included in this study and were classified according to the modalities of treatment into 2 main groups: conservative (non- operative) group were 14 cases and surgical (operative) group were 6 cases. Conservative group include 9 male and 5 female, while surgical group include 3 male and 3 female.

Age distribution of patients included in the study.

	0-10 ys	11-30 ys	31-40 ys	41-60 ys
Conservative	2	7	3	2
Surgical	2	3	1	0

According to the type of trauma we had in the Conservative group the mechanism of blunt trauma in 12 cases that include fall from height (FFH) in 3, striking hard objects (SHO) in 4 & motor vehicle

accident (MVA) in 5 cases. While in the Surgical group the mechanism of blunt trauma in 7 cases that include fall from height in 1, striking hard objects in 3 & motor vehicle accident in 3 cases.

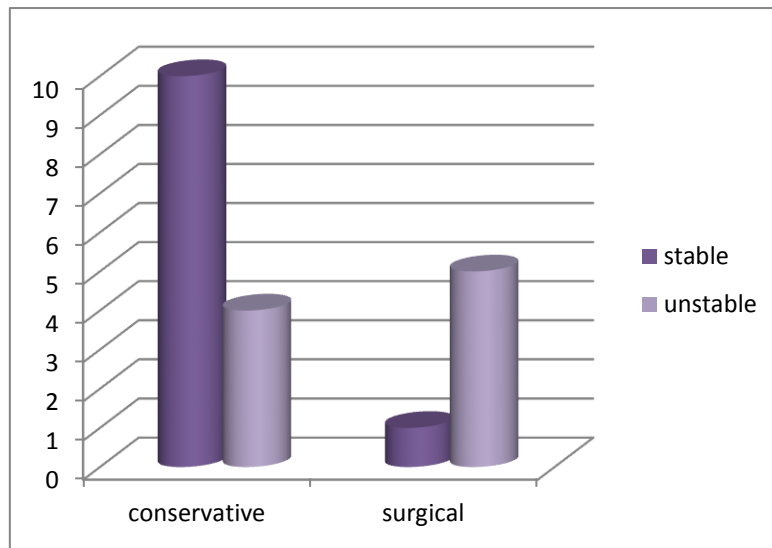
Type of trauma of patients included in the study.

	FFH	SHO	MVA
Conservative	3	4	5
Surgical	1	3	3

There was 3 cases in conservative group diabetic and hypertensive and in surgical group only one case which was hypertensive.

conservatively, and 1 treated surgically), The other 9 patients were haemodynamically un-stable (4 cases respond to resuscitation and treated conservatively, while 5 cases did not respond to resuscitation and required urgent exploration).

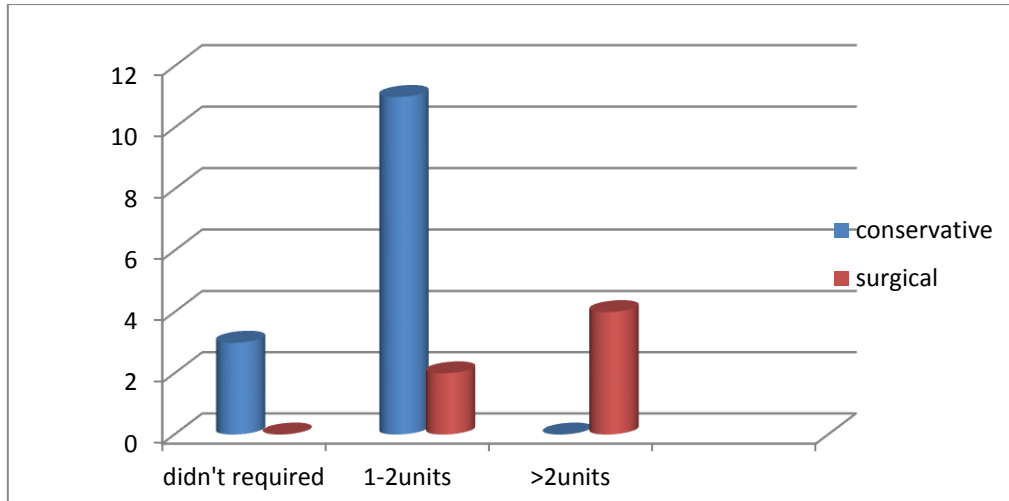
On admission 11 patients were haemodynamically stable (10 were treated



Hemodynamic stability of patients included in the study.

In the conservative group 3 cases didn't require blood transfusion while the other 11 cases (5 cases required 1 unit of blood and other 4 cases required 2 units of

blood). While in the Surgical group 3 cases required 2 units of blood and other 4 cases required 3 units of blood.



Blood units distribution of patients included in the study.

Ultrasonography was done in all cases of the study (18 cases were treated conservatively and 6 cases needed abdominal exploration), while Compu-

terized tomography was done in 16 cases only (13 cases were treated conservatively and 3 cases required exploration).

Distribution of amount of collection in U/S of patients included in the study.

	No collection	minimal	Mild	moderate	Marked
Conservative	0	4	7	3	0
Surgical	0	1	1	1	3

According to AAST after imaging by U/S & CT; in the conservative group 1 case were grade I, 7 cases were grade II, 0 cases were grade III & 0 cases were grade IV.

While in the surgical group 0 cases were grade I, 0 cases were grade II, 1 case were grade III, 1 case were grade IV & 4 cases were grade V.

Distribution of grade of splenic injury of patients included in the study

	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Grade V
Conservative	0	4	0	0	0
Surgical	0	0	1	1	4

Associated extra-abdominal injuries distribution of patients included in the study.

	Conservative	NO	Ttt	Surgical	NO	ttt
Neurological	Brain edema	1	Medical	Brain edema	1	Non
	Extra Dural hematoma	2	surgical	Hemorrhagic contusion	1	treated Conservatively (brain dehydrating measures+ stimulants)
				Scalp injury	1	Suture
Cardiothoracic	Haemothorax	2	ICT	Haemothorax	1	ICT
	pneumothorax	2	ICT	Pneumothorax	1	ICT
	Fracture ribs	3	Binder	Fracture ribs	2	ICT in one& binder in one
	Lung contusion	2	Medical	Lung contusion	1	Non
Orthopedic	Fracture femur	1	Surgical			
	Fracture tibia	1	Surgical			

Suture splenorhaphy with vicryl was done in 1 case, and splenectomy was done in 0 cases.

In the conservative group, postoperative peri-splenic abscess was detected in two cases in which sonar guided drainage was successful. While in the surgical group, left subphrenic abscess was detected in one case

in which sonar guided drainage was successful. And seroma of the exploratory wound was detected in one case in which antibiotics& repeated dressings was successful.

Complications in patients included in the study.

	Conservative	Surgical
Free	12	3
Wound seroma	0	1
Subphrenic abscess	2	1

1 case died in surgical group intra operative due to massive haemorrhage while no mortality in conservative group.

Admission in ICU was required for 0 patients of the conservative group and 3 patients of the surgical group.

In the conservative group; 9 cases stay in hospital for less than one week (0 cases stay 7 days and 9 cases stay 8 days), while 0 cases stay for 1-2 week (3 cases stay 13 days and 2 cases stay 10 days). While in the surgical group 8 cases stay for 0 days, while 1 case stay for 10 days & 1 case died intra operative.

All patients were followed up in the outpatient clinic for 1 month by clinical examination & imaging (U/S), 0 cases were followed up by C.T

In the Conservative group; 12 cases showed satisfactory progress and the other 2 patients developed peri-splenic abscess that resolved by antibiotics. While in the surgical group 3 cases showed satisfactory progress, while 2 cases developed complication as wound seroma in one patient which treated medically and subphrenic abscess in one patient which treated medically by antibiotics.

Distribution of complications after discharge in patients included in the study.

	Conservative	Ttt	Surgical	ttt
Free	12	-	3	-
Abscess	2	Treated medically by antibiotics	1	Treated medically by antibiotics
Seroma	0	-	1	Medical ttt

Discussion

Until recently, the accepted treatment for splenic trauma, even for minor injuries, used to be splenectomy. This aggressive approach was based on the belief that, in adulthood, the spleen does not contribute any major function and conservative treatment was associated with potential life-threatening haemorrhage. With increasing recognition of the spleen's role in immunological function and awareness of overwhelming post-splenectomy sepsis (OPSI), there has been an increasing trend towards conservative treatment and splenic salvage procedure⁽¹¹⁾.

However, this changed policy towards splenic conservation requires careful risk-benefit analysis in the face of potentially life-threatening haemorrhage from delayed splenic rupture and the possibility of transfusion-induced viral infections.

Furthermore, the increasing availability of reliable and good quality radiological imaging including ultrasound, computerized tomography (CT) scanning, and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) have greatly improved the information available with regard to the nature of the splenic injury and this may well help to identify the suitable patients for conservative management⁽¹²⁾.

We have reviewed the outcome of splenic injuries in our study with the main aim of examining the effect of this changed conservative policy on patients and its implications.

During our study period 20 patients exposed to blunt abdominal trauma, of them

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18 patients responded to conservative management, 1 patient required splenectomy due to failure of conservative management a percentage of 90% versus 95% respectively.

In the study done by (R. Aseervatham, M. muller 2011) eighty-five patients were identified. Non-operative management was used on 39 patients, while 16 patients were managed surgically a percentage of 46.7% versus 53.3%⁽¹³⁾.

In the study done by (Köksal N, Uzun MA, and Müftüoğlu T 2011) 26 patients were identified. Non-operative management was used on 20 patients, while 6 patients were managed surgically a percentage of 76.9% versus 23.1%. These agree with our study⁽¹⁴⁾.

This also agrees with the study done by (Lo A, Matheson AM, Adams, 2014) eighty patients were identified. Non-operative management was used on 50 patients, while 30 patients were managed surgically a percentage of 62.5% versus 37.5%⁽¹⁵⁾.

In the study done by (A yaghoubi Notash, H Ahmadi Amoli, et al., 2017) 320 patients were identified. Non-operative management was used on 132 patients, while 188 patients were managed surgically a percentage of 41.2% versus 58.8%. This doesn't agree with our study⁽¹⁶⁾.

- Regarding the age in our study, we noticed that there was a slight age difference between patients who failed conservative management, 33.3% for children and 66.7% for adults versus, for patients who completed the conservative

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management successfully, 14.2% for children and 80.8% for adults.

But in the study done by (S Sinha, SVV Raja, and MH Lewis 2008) 11 patients were identified. The median patient age was 17 years (range, 12-21 years). The median age of the operative and non-operative groups was not significantly different⁽¹⁴⁾.

But in the study of (Douglas and Simpson 1991) described 32 cases of children with clinical signs of splenic injury treated conservatively out of whom, 20 children did not require surgical intervention. This study proved that the spleen has indeed the capability of healing itself with an excellent outcome in selected cases⁽¹⁵⁾.

But in the study done by (George A Giannopoulos, Iraklis E Katsoulis, et al., 2009) non – operative management was initially applied in 33.3% (22 patients) of all blunt abdominal injuries. No significant differences were observed between operative group and conservative group in relation with age⁽¹⁶⁾.

- Regarding the grade of injury our study showed that:
 - a- 1 patients (0%) were of grade I
 - This patient was successfully treated none operatively (a percentage of 100% of grade I splenic injury).
 - b – 2 patients (18%) were of grade II
 - All of them were successfully treated none operatively (a percentage of 100% of grade II splenic injury).
 - c – 3 patients (27%) were of grade III
 - 0 of them were successfully treated none operatively (a percentage of 0% of grade III splenic injury).
 - The remaining one patient were needed operative Interference and splenorrhaphy was done (a percentage of 100% of grade III splenic injury).
 - d - 3 patients (27%) were of grade IV
 - 2 of them were successfully treated none operatively (a percentage of 66.6% of grade IV of splenic injury).
 - The remaining 1 patient needed operative Interference and splenectomy was done (a percentage of 33.3% of grade IV of splenic injury).

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- e- 2 patients (18%) were of grade V
 - All cases needed operative interference and splenectomy was done (a percentage of 100% of grade V splenic injury).

These our results concluded that lower grades (I-III) have the highest rate of success. Included that class I, II and III can be treated safely and class IV can be treated with high prediction of failure and recommended that class V should be treated surgically

- In the study done by (Köksal N, Uzun MA, Müftüoğlu T 2000) on 16 patients concluded that The mean operative splenic injury grade was 3 in the patients who underwent surgery, and the mean injury grade based on CT scan was 2.6 in the patients who were managed conservatively⁽¹⁷⁾.

- In the study done by (S Sinha, SVV Raja, and MH Lewis 2008) 11 patients concluded that Using Buntain's CT grading, the majority of grades I and II splenic injuries were managed non-operatively and grades III and IV were managed operatively. These agree with our study⁽¹⁸⁾.

- This also agree with the study done by (Lisa K. McIntyre, MD; Melissa et al., 2000) on 2245 patients concluded that Risk of failure increased with admission to a level III or IV trauma hospital compared with a level I trauma hospital⁽¹⁹⁾.

- In our study, the mean duration of hospital stay for patients who were treated conservatively was slightly higher than those who needed operative.

- This agree with the study done by (S Sinha, SVV Raja, and MH Lewis, 2008) concluded that the non-operative group had a significantly longer hospital stay⁽¹⁸⁾.

- This also agree with the study done by (Köksal N, Uzun MA, Müftüoğlu, 2000) concluded that the mean duration of hospitalization in the patients with operative and non-operative management groups were 2.6 and 4.6 days, respectively⁽¹⁷⁾.

- In the study done by (M Beuran, I Gheju, et al., 2012) concluded that hospital stay varies between 3 to 5 days when no other injuries are present to elicit a prolonged stay⁽²⁰⁾.

- But in the the study done by (Margherita Cadeddu, Anna Garnett, et al., 2006) concluded that The median length of

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stay in hospital was significantly higher in the operative group than in the Nonoperative group that don't agree with our study⁽¹⁷⁾.

- Regarding the blood transfusion in our study is the need for transfusion greater in patients managed surgically.

- In the study done by (Köksal N, Uzun MA, Müftüoğlu T, 2000) concluded that The mean unit of blood transfusion in the patients with operative and non-operative management groups were 1.1 and 0.7. this don't agree with our study. These agree with our study⁽¹⁸⁾.

- In the study done by (R. Aseervatham, M. Muller, 2001) concluded that transfusion requirement were lower in non-operative group. This also agree with our study⁽¹⁹⁾.

- In the study done by (S Sinha, SVV Raja, and MH Lewis 2008) concluded that Blood transfusion requirement was significantly higher among the operative group⁽²⁰⁾.

- In the study done by (Lo A, Matheson AM, Adams D 2004) concluded that transfusion requirement were lower in non-operative group than surgical group⁽²¹⁾.

- Regarding the mortality rate in our study one patient only died in surgical group intra operative and no mortality in non-operative group.

- In the study done by (Köksal N, Uzun MA, Müftüoğlu T 2000) concluded that no mortality in surgical and conservative group⁽¹⁸⁾.

- In the study done by (S Sinha, SVV Raja, and MH Lewis 2008) concluded that There were no deaths in the non-operative group. In the operative group, one patient who sustained polytrauma remained unstable, developed a systole and died in ICU on the first postoperative day⁽²⁰⁾.

- In the study done by (Margherita Cadeddu, Anna Garnett, et al., 2006) concluded that the mortality rate was similar between operative and Nonoperative groups (9.3% v. 6.8%, p = 0.49)⁽²²⁾.

- In the study done by (Yikun Qu, Shiyun Ren, Chunmin Li, et al., 2013) concluded that Fourteen of 70 patients (20%) undergoing splenectomy had intra-

peritoneal hemorrhage: reoperation was performed in 13 patients, and 3 patients died after reoperation, giving the hospital a mortality rate of 21.43%; whereas, 90 of 70 patients (98%) had no hemorrhage following splenectomy, and the mortality rate (0.3%) in this group was significantly lower ($P < 0.001$)⁽²³⁾.

- Regarding the hemodynamic in our study 11 patients were hemodynamically stable and 9 patients were hemodynamically un-stable. 14 patients treated conservatively, while 6 patients treated surgically. Our study concluded that patients who are hemodynamically stable patients are safe, effective.

- In the study done by (J. Skattum, P. A. Naess, C. Gaarder 2011) concluded that non-operative management continues to be reported as a successful approach in hemodynamically stable patients without other indications for laparotomy, achieving high success rates in both children and adults. These agree with our study⁽²⁴⁾.

- In the study done by (Lo A, Matheson AM, Adams D 2004) concluded that Patients with splenic injuries who are hemodynamically stable can be managed non-operatively with acceptable outcome. However, in the presence of concomitant trauma, there is an increasing trend towards operative management. This also agrees with our study⁽²¹⁾.

- In the study done by (Köksal N, Uzun MA, Müftüoğlu T 2000) concluded that hemodynamic stability is the most important factor which could affect the selection of patients for non-operative management outcome regardless of the patient age and computed tomography scan grading of the injury. These also agree with our study⁽¹⁸⁾.

So we can conclude that non operative management for blunt splenic trauma in hemodynamically stable patients is safe, effective and associated with, low morbidity and no mortality especially in grade I-II and III with inferior results in grade V.

However, non-operative management should be practiced in hospitals where an efficient ICU is available.

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