54. SURGICAL APPROACH TO NASAL DEFECTS: CLASSIFICATION AND USE OF GRAFTS IN RECONSTRUCTIVE RHINOPLASTY

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Introduction. Reconstructive rhinoplasty restores nasal form and function after surgical excision, trauma, or congenital anomalies. Nasal defects may affect different subunits of the nasal pyramid and require individualized reconstructive strategies depending on defect size and location. Appropriate graft selection is essential for structural stability and optimal aesthetic outcomes.

Case presentation. Two clinical cases of structural nasal defects following surgical excision were analyzed. The first case involved bilateral alar defects with loss of cartilaginous support and distortion of the nasal contour. Reconstruction was performed using bilateral free cartilage grafts harvested from the auricular concha to restore alar support and external nasal valve stability. The second case involved a combined defect of the nasal tip and one alar region. Reconstruction was performed using a free cartilage graft harvested from the left auricular concha, sculpted to restore nasal tip projection and contour symmetry. Auricular cartilage was chosen due to its natural curvature, flexibility, availability, and low donor-site morbidity.

Discussions. Nasal reconstruction may involve grafts or vascularized flaps. Grafts include autologous grafts (auricular cartilage, costal cartilage, bone, dermis), allogeneic grafts, and alloplastic materials. Autologous grafts remain the gold standard because of their biocompatibility and low complication rates. Auricular cartilage is particularly useful for reconstruction of the nasal tip and alar structures. Local and regional flaps provide vascularized tissue coverage for larger or more complex nasal defects.

Conclusions. Post-ablative reconstructive rhinoplasty requires individualized surgical planning. Autologous cartilage grafts, particularly auricular cartilage, represent an effective option for moderate structural nasal defects, allowing restoration of nasal contour, structural support, and facial symmetry with a low risk of complications.

Keywords. nasal defect, cartilage graft, auricular concha, reconstructive rhinoplasty.

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