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Abstract

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Introduction: Patients regularly present with nasal septal defects that have been treated with buttons elsewhere and are suffering from considerable discomfort. Button removal alone almost always leads to a significant reduction in symptoms. As almost all these nasal septal defects could subsequently be treated surgically, the question arises as to whether button treatment for nasal septal defects is still appropriate.

Methods: All patients with a nasal septal defect who were currently or in the past treated with a septum button were included in this study. After button removal, the relative defect size was determined, and the septa were surgically reconstructed. Anamnestic data, size classification, endonasal and intraoperative findings as well as the surgical results were investigated.

Results: From 2010 to 2020, a total of 1,081 patients presented with nasal septal defects. 82 patients carried so-called septum buttons, in 77 cases the button bridge was much smaller than the defect. A further 31 patients - without a button at the time of presentation - reported an inadequate button treatment in the past. The duration of usage varied between 3 weeks and 3 years. 2/3 of the patients presented on their own initiative, 1/3 were referred by ENT specialists (outpatient and inpatient).

Conclusions: All patients treated with septal buttons had severe symptoms and all defects could be surgically closed after removal of the buttons. From the point of view of an experienced rhinosurgeon, the treatment of nasal septal defects with buttons is therefore not a sufficient therapeutic option.

