

Surgery in Adult Patients with Cystic Fibrosis

It has been drawn to the attention of the Consultative Council on Anaesthetic Mortality and Morbidity by A/Professor John Wilson, Head of the Adult Cystic Fibrosis Unit at the Alfred Hospital that young adults with this disease are prone to present with bowel obstruction and may undergo surgery in units not accustomed to managing such patients. In the appropriate units for specialized care of these patients, surgical intervention can frequently be avoided. Where an operation has been performed outside specialty centres several patients have developed serious peri-operative complications including respiratory failure due to excessive bronchial secretions and distal obstruction combined with the use of drugs for pain management. Surgeons should be aware of this problem and should encourage early referral of such patients to their specialty centre for advice or management.