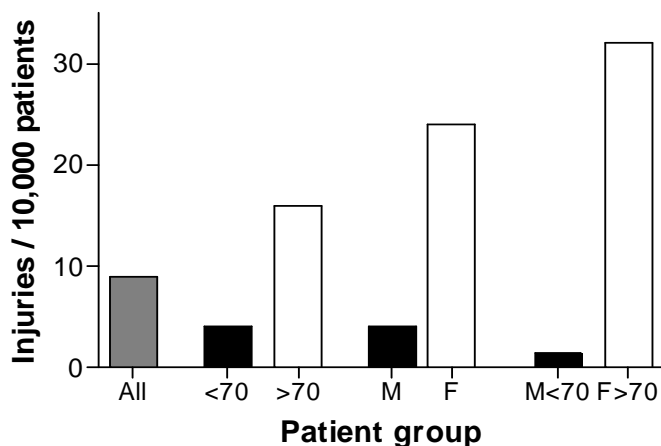




The incidence of TOE-related complications in Victorian cardiac surgery centres

Over the past decade the Victorian Consultative Council on Anaesthetic Morbidity and Mortality has received a small number of case reports of complications related to the use of transoesophageal echocardiography in cardiac surgery. A handful of international studies had defined the incidence of TOE-related complications as very low, of the order of 3-4 per 10,000 cases. Using the Australian Society of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgeons database between 2001 and 2007 financial years, we sought to define the local incidence and outcome from TOE-related complications, and assess any possible risk factors, such as age or sex.

Figure 1



The above figure summarises the key findings. Overall, the incidence of TOE-related complications was higher, at 9 per 10,000, with a mortality rate of 2 per 10,000. Patients aged over 70 years had a relative risk of 3.7 compared to those under 70 (95% CI 1.2-11.7). Women had a relative risk of 6.5 compared to men (95% CI 2.0-21.1). Females over 70 had a relative risk of 22 compared to men under 70 (95% CI 2-182). We concluded that older women have a substantially greater risk for TOE-related injury.

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