**The rabbit: an experimental animal model for lymphedema**

Lymphedema is a progressive and lifelong condition with no established curative treatment. Its physiopathology is still unclear and its surgical approaches are still under progress. Autologous lymph node transfer, lymphaticovenous anastomosis and other lymphatic surgical techniques have been performed in last decades to treat lymphedema. Despite some satisfactory results in selective cases, these procedures still require further development and always demand supermicrosurgical skills. Animals models are an important research base to obtain insights into lymphedema physiopathology and are promising to reveal a future definitive treatment. We have been using the rabbit as an animal model of lymphedema induction for studying different surgical techniques and also for developing microsurgical skills.