[Improve your skills!: evaluation of a 2.5-day basic course in vascular surgery for surgical trainees].

Abstract:
The traditional surgical training in the operating room (OR) is often complemented by participation in workshops and on simulators. The foundation Vascular International offers basic courses for vascular surgery techniques with training on pulsatile circulation, lifelike anatomical models. The aim of this study was to assess the efficacy of a 2.5-day intensive course on basic skills in vascular surgery. A total of 24 participants (67% male with an average age of 35 years) performed a vein patch-plasty before and after the basic vascular surgery instruction course. Endpoints of the study were the time needed for suturing and the technical quality, which were evaluated by two course trainers on a scale of 0-10. Furthermore, the participants were asked to evaluate their own technical competence. The statistical analysis was carried out using MS Excel (t-test and analysis of correlation). A significantly shortened time for the suturing (19.5 min versus 14.1 min, p<0.001) and improved quality of the vein patch were found after the workshop (p<0.05) with a high correlation between the two observers (r = 0.885). The participants also evaluated their own surgical competence better at the end of the training but there was no correlation between the self-assessment and the quality of the patch (r = 0.146 before and r = 0.109 after the workshop). A significant improvement in the time needed for suturing and the quality of 
the vein patch-plasty was shown in this study. Further studies are necessary to demonstrate the long-term success and possible shortening of the learning curve in hospitals with professional training. With regard to the current curriculum of surgical trainees in Germany basic vascular surgery courses should be considered as a potential valuable part of the surgical common trunk.