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Title

Epidemiology of distal radius fixations and time to fracture healing in the super-elderly patients

Purpose

The aim of this study is to demonstrate that surgical fixation in the super-elderly population is a relatively safe procedure with good outcome results.

Methods

A list of patients who fulfilled the age criteria and underwent surgical fixation was generated from our institution's Operating Theatre record system. Their medical records and radiological films were reviewed and fractures were classified according to the AO classification. The American Association of Anesthesiologists (ASA) physical status classification was used as a surrogate of the patients' pre-operative physical fitness. Any related complications related to the anaesthesia or surgery were recorded. Radiographic union was documented when callus was seen on X-ray.

Results

71 patients were included in our study aged between 80 to 97 years old. There was a female predominance and 91% of them were independent in Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and community ambulant. 96% were in the ASA 2 to 3 categories and a large majority (70%) underwent surgery with regional anaesthesia. There were no anaesthesia-related complications. The mean number of days for fracture healing was 47 days. Only 2 (0.3%) sustained complications at follow-up: 1 non-union and 1 post-operative superficial wound infection. There were no post-operative median nerve complications reported.

Conclusion

Surgical fixation of distal radius fractures is a relatively safe procedure in the super-elderly, as majority go on to achieve fracture healing without significant morbidity.