
REHABILITATION TREATMENT OF FLACCID PARALYTIC FOOT DROP FOLLOWING A SEVERE KNEE SPRAIN: ABOUT ONE CASE

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Background

Paralytic foot drop is a frequent complication of peripheral nervous system disorders. Trauma of the lower limb can cause injury to the external popliteal sciatic nerve, resulting in a flaccid paralytic foot that impairs walking.

Case report

We report the case of a young man aged 22, with no particular pathological history, who suffered a closed trauma to the left knee during a football match, resulting in total functional impotence of the left lower limb, and who underwent orthopaedic treatment using an orthosis with appropriate medical treatment. As the impotence persisted, the patient was seen again 21 days later and underwent MRI of the knee, which revealed damage to the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and external lateral ligament, tendinitis of the quadriceps tendon and suspected damage to the popliteal external sciatic (PES). An electroneuromyography (ENMG) of the lower limb showed severe truncal damage (neurotmesis) of the PES with signs of active denervation. Functionally, the patient had a stepping gait with a paralytic foot drop and voluntary control of the left foot at 0 in dorsal flexion. For daily walking, the patient used a walking stick on the healthy side. The patient underwent 30 sessions of functional rehabilitation of the left lower limb with work on the gait pattern and prescription of a levator splint. Progress was marked by an improvement in voluntary control of the foot drop, with voluntary control in dorsal flexion increased to 2 with weaning of the English cane, while retaining the levator splint for walking.

Conclusion

Post-traumatic paralytic foot drop due to damage to the external popliteal sciatic nerve is a frequent functional disorder, the management of which can range from functional re-education and orthopaedic devices to surgical intervention via tenotomies, tendon transfers or arthrodesis, depending on the indications.

Keywords: flaccid, paralytic, foot, knee, sprain