



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Service review of integrated care of Charcot foot arthropathy in Chinese diabetic patients - 19 years experience in Kwong Wah Hospital

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Introduction

Diabetes is a prevalent disease (1 in 10) and the most common cause of charcot foot arthropathy in Hong Kong.

Objectives

(1) To share the experience on service delivery to patients with charcot foot arthropathy. (2) To delineate the epidemiology, characteristic and clinical outcomes of charcot foot arthropathy in Chinese diabetic patients. (3) To maintain and improve the quality of care for charcot foot arthropathy patients.

Methodology

Patient records since 1995, with the establishment of multidisciplinary Diabetic Foot Clinic in Kwong Wah Hospital, were retrospectively reviewed and analysed.

Result

There were 43 diabetic patients (47 feet) diagnosed with Charcot foot arthropathy over 19 years. Male patient were more common (n=27, 64%). The mean age was 64 at the time of diagnosis (range, 35-89). The mean interval from the first diagnosis of diabetes to Charcot arthropathy is 9.4 years (range, 0-30). Most common presentation is swelling (n=29, 61.7%). Although Charcot arthropathy is classically painless, a minority of patient presented with pain (n=5, 10.6%). More patients have history of preceding trauma (n=29, 61.7%), but most are trivial injury. Bilateral involvement is uncommon (n=4, 9.3%). Delay in diagnosis is common if the patients were first managed by non-orthopaedic surgeon (110 days vs 10 days). Recurrent ulceration is not uncommon (n=11, 23.4%). Two patients underwent major amputation, both were related to deep infection. In conclusion, Charcot foot arthropathy is uncommon in Chinese diabetic patients (6.3 in 1000), however the outcome can be disastrous if the diagnosis was delayed or missed. Common presentation is unilateral painless foot swelling in long-standing diabetic patient. With high index of suspicion and early referral to orthopaedic surgeon, we expect there will be earlier diagnosis, proper management and less morbidity and mortality.