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Evaluating clinical effectiveness and patient satisfaction of partial nail avulsion procedure

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Introduction

Ingrown toenail is a common complaint within the podiatric scope. It comprises of approximately one-third of the priority one new cases in the podiatry department in KEC. If conservative measures fail to resolve the problem or recurrence is frequent, partial nail avulsion with chemical matrix ablation would be considered. In the past, research mainly focused on clinical measurements of treatment outcomes while patient expectations and satisfaction were often missed out. It is undeniable that patient satisfaction is one of the important parameters in the evaluation of outcomes and effectiveness of a clinical intervention. Within the podiatric field, similar research has been conducted to assess patient expectations and satisfaction on various podiatric procedures in the United Kingdom. However, no audit has so far been conducted on patient satisfaction with the podiatry service in Hong Kong.

Objectives

The aim of this study was to audit the clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction with the partial nail avulsion procedure performed in the KEC podiatry department.

Methodology

The validated PASCOP patient satisfaction questionnaire consisting of 10 questions was adopted and translated into Chinese version to yield data from patients participated in the partial nail avulsion procedures in our department during 2013-2015. In addition, recurrence episodes and healing times were recorded. Data was collected face-to-face during the second post-operative review (4 weeks post-op) or retrospectively collected through phone calls.

Result

264 valid questionnaires were collected from 221 respondents. The overall recurrence rate found in our study was 2.3% which was consistently low compared with similar studies worldwide of up to 5.7% (Lau and Yeung, 2005). Among the 6 recurrence

cases, 3 needed additional procedures for correction while the rest remained asymptomatic. 96.2% of the respondents reported no major problems, such as severe pain or nail deformities, after the procedure. The most frequent expectation from the respondents was "pain relief", followed by "healing of wound" and "no recurrence", in which 94.7% of the respondents stated that their expectations were met after the procedure. The overall satisfaction rate with the procedure was 98.9%. The quantitative data yielded has demonstrated promising clinical effectiveness and patient satisfaction rates with the partial nail avulsion procedures performed in our clinic. Moreover, the study has provided basis and inspiration for further research to ensure continuous quality improvement of the services provided by the podiatry department.