SCIENTIFIC PAPER

Radiological Evaluation and Role of Surgery in Retrocalcaneal Bursitis

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study was performed to ascertain the radiological evaluation and surgical results for patients with posterior heel pain.

Patients and Methods: Evaluation of calcaneal abnormalities and surgical treatment in the form of excision of bursa and bursal projection was performed for 40 patients with posterior heel pain.

Results: Thirty three patients had retrocalcaneal bursitis and 7 had insertional Achilles tendinosis. Radiological findings of the calcaneus did not differ between symptomatic and control heels except for posterior calcaneal erosions and calcification in tendo Achilles. Calcification in the Achilles tendon on lateral X-ray is usually associated with symptoms of posterior heel pain and advanced disease process. The surgery was moderately successful, but was associated with initial discomfort for 2 to 3 months after surgery. The results may be further compromised if systemic inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or its variants are associated with retrocalcaneal bursitis and if the symptoms are of long duration.

Conclusion: Surgical treatment in the form of excision of bursal projection with bursa is easy and safe to perform but the results are moderate.

Key Words: Achilles tendon, Bursitis, Calcaneum

中文摘要

跟骨後滑囊炎之X線評估及手術治療

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本文評審40位病者因後踵痛而接受手術治療之成效。病者跟骨之X線特徵與對照組並無明顯差異，但病者多有跟骨後部磨耗及跟腱末端鈣化特徵。手術技術不困難及基本安全，但病者多於術後2至3個月內仍有不適。如病者同時患有類風濕關節炎等症則療效略遜。

INTRODUCTION

Retrocalcaneal bursitis is a common and challenging clinical problem, characterised by pain that is anterior to the tendon, just superior to its insertion in the os calcis. The retrocalcaneal bursa, which lies between the anterior aspect of the tendon and the posterior aspect of the os calcis, becomes inflamed, hypertrophied, and adherent to the underlying tendon.\(^1\) Lateral X-ray of the heel usually shows an abnormal prominence on the posterosuperior surface of the calcaneus, known as a bursal projection, a deformity originally described by Haglund in 1928.\(^2\)

Insertional tendinosis is one of several conditions that present with posterior heel pain, and is caused by an inflammatory reaction within the tendon. The