The management of Charcot Joint Disease affecting the ankle and foot by arthrodesis controlled by an Ilizarov frame, Early Results

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Abstract:

Abstract: Charcot osteoarthropathy of the foot is a chronic and progressive disease of bone and joint associated with a risk of amputation. The main problems encountered in this process are osteopenia, fragmentation of the bones of the foot and ankle, joint subluxation or even dislocation, ulceration of the skin and the development of deep sepsis. We report our experience of a series of 20 patients with Charcot osteoarthropathy of the foot and ankle treated with an Ilizarov external fixator. The mean age of the group was 30 years (21 to 50). Diabetes mellitus was the underlying cause in 18 patients. Five had chronic ulcers involving the foot and ankle. Each patient had an open lengthening of the tendo Achillis with excision of all necrotic and loose bone from the ankle, subtalar and midtarsal joints when needed. The resulting defect was packed with corticocancellous bone graft harvested from the iliac crest and an Ilizarov external fixator was applied. Arthrodesis was achieved after a mean of 18 weeks (15 to 20), with healing of the skin ulcers. Pin track infection was not uncommon, but no frame had to be removed before the arthrodesis was sound. Every patient was able to resume wearing regular shoes after a mean of 26.5 weeks

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