



Postoperative C.T. Assessment with Clinical Correlation of Accuracy of Lumbar Pedicle Screw Insertion

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the master degree
(M.Sc.) in neurosurgery

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2013

مستخلص

اجتماع لجنة الحكم على الرسالة المقدمة من
الطبيب / محمد سعيد عبد المظفر الفتح
توطئة للحصول على درجة الماجستير / الدكتوراه
في براعة المخ والأعضاء

تحت عنوان : باللغة الانجليزية
Postoperative C.T Assessment
with Clinical Correlation of accuracy
of lumbar pedicle screw insertion.

باللغة العربية : تقييم وضع حساب العنق للفقراء
القطرية مع المتلازم الي كلوية باستخدام الأشهر
المعقمة بعد الجرام

بناء على موافقة الجامعة بتاريخ / / ٢٠٠٠ تم تشكيل لجنة الفحص والمناقشة
للمرسالة المذكورة أعلاه على النحو التالي :-

1. م. د. محمد رشاد الجاوي

٢.١ / د. أحمد عبد العزيز خجاری

۳. P. ۱۵۰ علی قلی علی

بعد فحص الرسالة بواسطة كل عضو منفردا وكتابة تقارير منفردة لكل منهم انعقدت اللجنة
مختمة في يوم الخميس بتاريخ ٢٠١٣ / ١ / ٢٠١٣ بقرار من مجلس الوزراء مخرج

مجتمعة في يوم: (الخميس) بتاريخ: ١١/١١/٢٠١٧
بكلية الطب - جامعة القاهرة وذلك لمناقشة الطالب في جلسة علنية في موضوع الرسالة والنتائج التي توصل اليها وكذلك الأسس العلمية التي قام عليها البحث .

قرار اللجنة: مردود إلى اللجنة

الممتحن الخارجى

المستثنى الداخلي

توقيعات أعضاء اللجنة :-
المشرف الممتحن

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حمام

Abstract

The objective of this study is to evaluate the incidence of lumbar pedicle screw misplacement whether open or percutaneous by postoperative CT scan and to correlate misplaced screws to the onset of clinical symptoms related to malposition if any.

Key Words: Pedicle screw, Misplacement, Fusion, Computed tomography

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, thanks to Allah, the most beneficent and most merciful.

I would like to express my heartiest gratitude to professor Dr. Essam Rashad Elgahawy, professor of neurosurgery (Cairo university), professor Dr. Ahmed Salah-Eldin Hassan, professor of neurosurgery (Cairo university), and Dr. Mohamed Ahmed Saied Sawan, professor of neurosurgery (Cairo university) for their kind help and support.

No words can express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Ahmed Salah-Eldin Hassan, professor of neurosurgery (Cairo University), for his sincere guidance, supervision and encouragement throughout this work.

I would like also to express my thanks and gratitude to my wife and my family for their encouragement and support.

Mohamed Mosaad Alfiky

Contents

● List of figures.....	I
● List of table.....	IV
● Introduction.....	1
● Aim of the work.....	6
● Review of literature:	
➤ Anatomy of the lumbar spine.....	7
➤ Indications of lumbar pedicle screw insertion...	26
➤ Operative techniques of insertion of lumbar pedicle screws.....	34
➤ Complications.....	48
● The study:	
➤ Patients and methods.....	64
➤ Results	69
➤ Case presentation.....	80
➤ Discussion.....	87
➤ Conclusion.....	100
● Summary.....	101
● References.....	107

List of Figures

Fig.1	Lumbar vetebra, (A) from above, (B) from the left, (C) from behind	p11
Fig.2	The location of the pedicle axis on the posterior aspect of the lumbar spine	p12
Fig.3	Anatomy of a lateral spinal passage of a right lumbar nerve root, viewed from a 45-degree posterolateral position.	p16
Fig.4	The three anatomic sections marked to designate different pain sources	p20
Fig.5	pedicle angulation at different levels, in sagittal plane (A), and transverse plane (B)	p23
Fig.6	Pedicle widths at different spinal level; (A) transverse width, (B) sagittal width (C) Chord length measured along a line 0 and 15 degrees relative to the sagittal plane.	p25
Fig.7	The kneeling position used in the posterior approach to the lumbar spine.	p34

Fig.8	Landmarks for identification of the pedicles.	p39
Fig.9	Alternative screw trajectories through the pedicle into the vertebral bodies.	p40
Fig.10	Image Intensifier radiographs of the percutaneous technique for pedicle screw insertion.	p44
Fig.11	Image Intensifier radiographs of the percutaneous technique for pedicle screw insertion.	p45
Fig.12	Diagrams illustrating the anatomical principles of percutaneous pedicle screw insertion.	p46
Fig.13	(A) Lateral view and (B) posterior view of entrance points for pedicle screw placement in the lumbar spine.	p51
Fig.14	Pedicle screw fixation success rate at each spine level.	p51
Fig.15	The data regarding displacement to totally intra pedicular screws.	p71
Fig.16	Pre-operative MRI and plain x-ray showing spondylolysis.	P82

Fig.17	Post operative plain x-ray assessment for inserted pedicular screws.	P82
Fig.18	Post operative C.T assessment for inserted pedicular screws showing laterally displaced screws both moderate and severe.	P83
Fig.19	Preoperative MRI showing degenerative spondylolysis.	P85
Fig.20	Post operative plain x-ray assessment for inserted pedicular screws.	P86
Fig.21	post operative C.T assessment for inserted pedicular screws showing medially displaced screws both minor and moderate.	P86

List of Tables

Table.1	Indication of surgical fixation.	P69
Table.2	Techniques of pedicle screw insertion.	P70
Table.3	Screws inserted in each level.	P70
Table.4	Degree of screw displacement.	P72
Table.5	The direction of cortical perforation.	P73
Table.6	Pedicular breach by screws.	P74
Table.7	The direction of displacement.	P75
Table.8	Degree of displaced screws in relation to vertebral level.	P76
Table.9	Displacement according to surgical technique.	P77
Table.10	Correlation between clinical, surgical, radiological data and displacement in lower lumbar levels.	P79

Introduction

Pedicle screw instrumentation is widely used in the lumbar spine as a means of stabilization to enhance arthrodesis. Indications for pedicle screw instrumentation include stabilization in the setting of trauma, deformity, tumors, infections, degenerative conditions and reconstruction. Since the introduction of pedicle screws, accuracy of placement has been the subject of many studies, in which a wide range of screw malposition rates have been reported (*Albert et al, 2004*)

The main problem at surgery is that a blind technique is used; the surgeon does not see the pedicle (*Castro et al, 1996*).

The risk of iatrogenic injury must be minimized as vital anatomic structures surround the pedicle: the dural sac medially, the nerve roots superiorly and inferiorly, and the vascular structures anterolaterally. Further, the accuracy of pedicle screw insertion is crucial for the efficiency and stability of the surgical procedure (*Albert et al, 2004*).

For accuracy, pedicle screw instrumentation may be guided by anatomic landmarks, preoperative imaging, and intraoperative imaging tools such as plain radiography, fluoroscopy, and, more recently, image-guided technology (*Akyildiz et al, 2005*).

The development of instrumentation techniques to stabilize and correct the injured or diseased thoracolumbar and lumbar spine has made enormous progress during recent years. Researchers have reported that transpedicular screw fixation is superior to anterior instrumentation and posterior hook-rod fixation because the pedicle offers a strong point of attachment (*Akyildiz et al, 2005*).

Pedicle screw placement does not pose the same high risk of damage to the spinal cord, dural sac, and nerve roots in the lumbar region as it does in thoracic and cervical spine. However, accurate anatomic knowledge is needed to perform a safe surgical intervention in the lumbar region (*Attar et al,2001*).

Frequently during the postoperative period, a surgeon must evaluate new complaints of pain or new neurological deficit. With the use of a pedicle screw system, it becomes imperative that a causal relation between the screws and neurological complication be ruled out (*Yoo et al, 1997*)

Concerns regarding safety, potential complications if screws are misplaced, and loss of mechanical advantage with pedicle wall disruption, have focused attention on screw placement techniques (*Robertson et al, 2000*)

The rate of misplaced screws still may be considerable and has been reported to range up to nearly 40% (*Grauer et al, 2004*) Many more misplacements occurred but went unobserved (*Glossop et al, 1996*). In a review of the literature, noted a 28.1% to 39.9% pedicle screw malposition rate in clinical studies and a 5.5% to 31.3% malposition rate in cadaver studies.

The percentage of malpositioned screws may be higher when normal anatomic landmarks have been obscured, as with revision surgery in the setting of a posterolateral fusion (*Austin et al, 2002*).

Although neurological deficits related to screw misplacement are less common, asymptomatic violations of the cortical bone can result in a weakened biomechanical construct. These risks are amplified in the thoracic spine, where the spinal cord is in closer proximity and pedicle size is reduced (*Wang et al, 2004*). Intraoperative fluoroscopy and serial radiography only demonstrate the depth of screw penetration but cannot be used to recognize screw malpositioning (*Açikbas et al, 2000*). The gold standard for detecting pedicle screw penetration in cadaveric studies has been direct observation at dissection (*Grauer et al, 2004*).

Although it is generally believed that CT imaging is more accurate than conventional radiography in determining pedicle screw location, particularly in

the setting of medial and lateral pedicle perforation, a range of accuracies for both radiographic and CT assessed perforations has been reported (*Ahlgren et al,2004*). However, no clear data currently exist on the sensitivity or the specificity of using CT images in identification of pedicle screw placement (*Yoo et al, 1997*).

Aim of work

1. Review of literature and recent publications regarding the lumbar spine anatomy, indications of pedicle screw insertion, surgical techniques of insertion of pedicle screws, the reported incidence of screw misplacement and other complications.

2. Evaluation of the accuracy of pedicle screw placement and the results of different techniques of surgery through a study done on 50 patients of both sexes and different ages reviewed for preoperative clinical symptoms and preoperative radiology including MRI and Plain x-rays and methods used for fixation. The patients will be evaluated by C.T. Scan with 2 mm axial slices with bone window will be performed in all cases to evaluate implant position after surgery and Correlation between clinical symptoms and radiological violation will be reported.

3. Analysis of data and results.

4. Discussion and conclusion.