Comparison of Elastic Intramedullary Nails and Locking Compression Plates on Oxidative Stress in Children with Distal Tibial Metaphyseal Fractures

Yupeng Xu, Guoyuan Huang and Cunliang Niu

Second Department of Orthopedics, Wuwei People's Hospital, Gansu, 733000, China

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to compare the effects of elastic intramedullary nails and locking compression plates on oxidative stress like superoxide dismutase (SOD), total antioxidant capacity (TAC), catalase (CAT), and malondialdehyde (MDA) in children with distal tibial metaphyseal fractures. It was an experimental study carried out from January 2012 to October 2017. Ninety-eight children with distal tibial metaphyseal fractures were randomly divided into group A and group B, 49 cases in each group. Group A was treated with elastic intramedullary nails and group B with locking compression plates. The research showed that operation time of group A was shorter than those of group B (p <0.001), incision complication rate of group A was lower than that of group B (p=0.025), and the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) ankle-hindfoot score of group A was higher than that of group B (p <0.001) after 12 months of follow-up. On the 7th day after operation, the levels of SOD, TAC and CAT in group A were higher than those in group B (p=0.003, p <0.001, p <0.001, respectively), but level of serum MDA in group A was lower than that in group B (p <0.001). Compared with locking compression plate, elastic intramedullary nail has better short-term effect, less operative time, lower incision complications, and less influence on oxidative stress.

Key Words: Children, Distal tibial fracture, Metaphysis, Intramedullary nail, Locking plate, Oxidative stress.

Oxidative stress in children with distal tibial metaphyseal fractures

Divided into group A and group B with 49 cases in each group. Group A was treated with elastic intramedullary nails, i.e. under general anesthesia, the incision was made at 1.5 - 2.0 cm of the proximal epiphysial plate of the tibia with manual sharp cone. The pre-curved elastic intramedullary nail was placed into the incision, and the intramedullary position of the intramedullary nail was determined under the fluoroscopy of "C" arm machine, and manual reduction was performed. Double elastic intramedullary nails were used. The elastic intramedullary nail was placed at the distal end of the fracture and the proximal epiphysial plate of the talus and tibia was about 0.5 cm. The same diameter elastic intramedullary nail was then placed on the opposite side. When the fluoroscopy reduction of "C" arm machine was good, the intramedullary nail was cut and the entrance was exposed about 3.0 cm. The force line of lower limbs was measured after operation to ensure that there was no rotation deformity in the calves.

Group B was treated with locking compression plate. Tibial plating was done by minimally invasive percutaneous plate osteosynthesis technology; namely, indirect reduction of distal tibial metaphyseal fracture by traction under general anesthesia. The steel plate was placed in medial tibia through subcutaneous tunnel and closed reduction was performed under C-arm fluoroscopy. The plate was fixed internally and the incision was closed when it is satisfied. Both groups of operations were performed by the same operating surgeon.

The operation time was compared between the two groups. Seven days before and after the operation, 3 mL of peripheral venous blood was collected and serum was centrifuged. The changes of SOD, TAC, CAT and MDA were detected and compared by enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA). The incidence of incision complications was observed and recorded. After 12 months of follow-up, the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) ankle-hindfoot score of the two groups were compared to evaluate the ankle function of the children. Collected data were analysed using independent sample t-test and Chi-square test by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. P-value of less than 0.05 showed significant difference.

Among 98 children, 55 were males (56.12%) and 43 were females (43.88%), the age was ranged from 7 to 15 years with an average age of 12.54 ± 2.65 years. The causes of injury were: 34 cases of traffic injuries (34.69%), 51 cases of fall injuries (52.04%), and 13 cases of high falling injuries (13.27%). There were 9 cases (9.18%) of transverse fracture, 40 cases (40.82%) of oblique fracture, 30 cases (30.61%) of spiral fracture, and 19 cases (19.39%) of comminuted fracture. According to AO classification criteria of distal tibial fractures, A1 type was 46 cases (46.94%), A2 type was 43 cases (43.88%), and A3 type was 9 cases (9.18%).

Operation time of group A was shorter than those of group B (p <0.001), incidence rate of incision complications of group A was lower than that of group B (p = 0.025), and AOFAS score of group A was higher than that of group B (p <0.001, Table I) after 12 months of follow-up.

Before operation, there was no significant difference in serum oxidative stress indicators between the two groups (p = 0.959, 0.907, 0.669, 0.623). On the 7th day after operation, the levels of SOD, TAC and CAT in serum of the two groups decreased slightly, but the levels of SOD, TAC and CAT in group A were higher than those in group B (p =0.003, p <0.001, p <0.001). The level of serum MDA in two groups was slightly higher than that before operation, but the level of serum MDA in group A was lower than that in group B (p <0.001, Table I).

This study showed that the operation time of elastic intramedullary nail was shorter than that of locking compression plate, which was consistent with previous studies. Dogra et al. considered that elastic intramedullary nails were safe and reliable in the treatment of distal tibial metaphyseal fractures. Guo et al. pointed out that both elastic intramedullary nails and locking compression plates could be used safely to treat distal tibial metaphyseal fractures, but the former had the advantages of short operation time and easy removal of implants. This study found that elastic intramedullary nail was superior to locking compression plate in terms of

### Table I: Comparison of the surgical results between two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Group A (n=49)</th>
<th>Group B (n=49)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operation time (min)</td>
<td>103.35 ±7.86</td>
<td>126.41 ±9.75</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOD before operation (nU/mL)</td>
<td>87.26 ±6.29</td>
<td>87.33 ±7.12</td>
<td>0.959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOD at 7 days after operation (nU/mL)</td>
<td>76.14 ±5.23</td>
<td>72.57 ±6.18</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAC before operation (kU/L)</td>
<td>13.78 ±1.61</td>
<td>13.82 ±1.75</td>
<td>0.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAC at 7 days after operation (kU/L)</td>
<td>10.39 ±1.02</td>
<td>8.56 ±0.97</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT before operation (nU/mL)</td>
<td>45.14 ±4.38</td>
<td>45.53 ±4.62</td>
<td>0.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT at 7 days after operation (nU/mL)</td>
<td>37.65 ±3.29</td>
<td>34.81 ±3.94</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDA before operation (μmol/L)</td>
<td>2.25 ±0.22</td>
<td>2.23 ±0.18</td>
<td>0.623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDA at 7 days after operation (μmol/L)</td>
<td>3.86 ±0.78</td>
<td>4.94 ±0.63</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidence rate of incision complications [n(%)]</td>
<td>2 (4.08)</td>
<td>9 (18.37)</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOFAS score after 12 months of follow-up (score)</td>
<td>88.81 ±3.94</td>
<td>82.47 ±3.36</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<sup>1</sup> The operation time was compared between the two groups. Seven days before and after the operation, 3 mL of peripheral venous blood was collected and serum was centrifuged. The changes of SOD, TAC, CAT and MDA were detected and compared by enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA). The incidence of incision complications was observed and recorded. After 12 months of follow-up, the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) ankle-hindfoot score of the two groups were compared to evaluate the ankle function of the children. Collected data were analysed using independent sample t-test and Chi-square test by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. P-value of less than 0.05 showed significant difference.

<sup>2</sup> Among 98 children, 55 were males (56.12%) and 43 were females (43.88%), the age was ranged from 7 to 15 years with an average age of 12.54 ± 2.65 years. The causes of injury were: 34 cases of traffic injuries (34.69%), 51 cases of fall injuries (52.04%), and 13 cases of high falling injuries (13.27%). There were 9 cases (9.18%) of transverse fracture, 40 cases (40.82%) of oblique fracture, 30 cases (30.61%) of spiral fracture, and 19 cases (19.39%) of comminuted fracture. According to AO classification criteria of distal tibial fractures, A1 type was 46 cases (46.94%), A2 type was 43 cases (43.88%), and A3 type was 9 cases (9.18%).

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incision complication rate and ankle function recovery after operation. The author found that elastic intramedullary nails had less effect on oxidative stress compared with locking compression plates. The reason may be that compared with elastic intramedullary nails, the treatment of locking compression plates has a bigger trauma, and is easier to activate neutrophils in vivo, produce more oxygen-free radicals, make lipid peroxidation, and then induce increased consumption of SOD, TAC, CAT, and increase production of MDA.

To sum up, compared with locking compression plate, elastic intramedullary nail has better short-term effect, less operative time, lower incision complications, and less influence on oxidative stress in the treatment of children with distal tibial metaphyseal fractures.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Authors declared no conflict of interest.

AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTION:
YX: Devoted to collecting and interpreting the data, drafted the manuscript, responsible for the conception and design of the study.
GH: Devoted to collecting and interpreting the data.
CN: Devoted to collecting and interpreting the data, revised it critically for important intellectual content.

REFERENCES