Management of the Degenerative AC Joint

Dave Cloke
Overview

- Diagnosis
  - Clinical
  - Investigations

- Conservative Management

- Operative Management
  - Open
  - Arthroscopic
History

- Carefully evaluate in all shoulder problems
  - ACJ is common cause of failure of Rx
  - ACJ rarely painful in isolation
- Injuries
  - Beware instability
- Site of pain
- Exacerbating factors
- Concomitant pathology
  - SAI - ? cause
  - Intraarticular – SLAP
- Level of pain and function
Examination

- (Neck)
- Tenderness
- Cross – chest adduction
  - “Scarf” test
- Signs of other pathology
  - Impingement / Cuff
  - SLAP – O’Brien may be +ve – check site of pain
- Instability
Investigations

- **XR**
  - Sensitivity/specificity?
  - Views, stress views

- **US**

- **MRI**
  - ? Arthrogram - ? Intraarticular lesion

- **L/A Injection**

- ? Other causes of ACJ arthritis – infection etc
Conservative management

- Analgesia
- Rehab
  - No specific ACJ treatments
- Injections:
  - Good improvement up to 1 yr, maintained 5 yrs
  - Hossain et al, JSES 2008
  - Diagnosis
Operative

- Open excision
- Direct arthroscopic excision
- Indirect (bursal) arthroscopic excision

Maybe better results from arthroscopic

- Meta-analysis Rabalais & McCarty, CORR 2007
Anatomy
Principles

- Stabilise if unstable
- Superior ligament important in AP stability
  - As little as 5mm medial to joint in females
- Coraco-clavicular ligts important restraint to superior displacement
  - 11mm medial to joint
  - Studies of CA ligt augmentation
- Resect joint surfaces without destabilising
  - Repair capsule if open, avoid if arthroscopic
Indirect

- ASD
- Anterior approach to ACJ
- Preserve superior capsule
- Excise generous shaver width
- Direct vision to confirm excision
  - Posteriorsuperior often missed
- May consider just coplaning inferior surface
- Neviaser portal

- Video
Direct

- ACJ only
- If isolated pathology
- Small joint scope
- ? More instability and inadequate resections
Complications

- Too little...
  - Inadequate resection
  - Posterosuperior

- Too much...
  - Instability

- New bone formation
Thank you
Discussion