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Recurrences and Functional Outcome after Therapy of Aneurysmal Bone Cysts

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Background:

Aneurysmal bone cysts (ABC) are rare benign lesions, growing locally destructive, with a known tendency to recur. To cure the lesion an operation has to be performed. The aim of our study was to determine the rate of recurrences and the functional outcome of our patients.

Methods:

Between 1981 and 2012 we treated 49 histologically diagnosed ABCs in 48 patients (22 female vs. 27 male). We performed 65 operations to cure the lesions. The patients were reviewed in regards to age, gender, size, localisation, the presence or absence of symptoms and fractures, number of operations, the applied operative procedures, the outcome and the rate of recurrences. The mean follow up was 36 months.

Results:

Patients' age was at an average of 23 years. The average maximum diameter of the cysts was 4,95 cm. The lesions were mostly located in the lower extremities (48,98%) followed by the upper extremities (22,45%), the pelvis (14,29%), the spine (10,2%) and the stem (2,04%). We saw ABCs of the soft tissue in 3 patients, 3 of all lesions were secondary ABCs. Almost all of the patients were symptomatic at diagnosis (93,88%), another 4,1% presented with fracture. 17 operations on recurrences were performed in 14 patients (28,57% rate of recurrences), 4 of those patients had undergone a previous curative operation at another hospital. Multiple recurrences were seen in only 3 patients (6,12%), none of them had to undergo more than 3 operations to achieve healing or stable disease. Patients with recurrences were slightly younger than the average (20 vs 23 years). The biggest functional deficit seen was one patient with extensions deficit of 5 degrees in the hip joint, another patient had a minor hypaesthesia of the lower limb.

Conclusion:

Even though ABCs are a locally destructive growing lesion, mostly of the lower limb, with a high tendency to recur and need for further operations, especially in younger patients, outcome is good and functional deficits are very rare.

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