Neglected Distal Humerus Fracture In Children

1Chiang KMW, 1Rahim MAA
Orthopaedics Department, Hospital Keningau, 89007 Keningau, Sabah

INTRODUCTION:
Elbow fractures are common in children. Supracondylar fractures are the most common one follows by lateral condyle but rarely distal humerus with intercondylar split. Neglected fractures in children are common in our locality due to patronage of traditional bonesetter. They usually presented late with elbow deformity, joint stiffness and prominent humeral condyles. We reported a pediatric case of neglected distal humerus fracture with intercondylar split which underwent adhesiolysis using triceps-sparing approach and screw fixation of lateral condyle.

MATERIALS & METHODS:
A 9 years old child presented with a neglected right distal humerus fracture with intercondylar split of 5 months. Chief complaints were restrictions of elbow movement and prominent lateral epicondyle. His elbow range of movement was only 5-15 degree in flexion and extension. X-ray showed malunion of lateral and medial humerus epicondyle and resorption of trochlear with fish-tail deformity. CT shows no bony block. We proceeded with corrective surgery using triceps-sparing approach and reduction of lateral condyle with 4.0mm cannulated screws. Medial condyle was malunited with difficulty in identifying its cartilage. Careful adhesiolysis of elbow joint was performed.

RESULTS:
Post-surgery 2 months, lateral condyle is united and child is able to achieve range of movement 5-90degree. There is no valgus nor varus deformity noted. Screws were removed after 2months and child able to achieve range of movement 5-110 on subsequent follow up.

DISCUSSIONS:
The pediatric distal humerus fracture is different from adult, and its rarity makes general consensus for treatment controversial. In our case of neglected fracture, accurate reduction was difficult as a result of callus formation with remodeling and difficulty in identifying humeral condyle cartilage. Most authors do not recommend surgery after 12 weeks due to its poor surgical outcome and problem of elbow joint stiffness.1

CONCLUSION:
Surgical intervention with early post-operative rehabilitation is a viable option for management