

Backpack Palsy

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- Abstract -

Background : Backpack palsy was described in military personnel with shoulder girdle and proximal upper extremity symptoms, predominantly motor in nature related to the use of heavy backpack. Currently, backpack were used for sports, transporting school books and child carriers. We evaluated clinical and electrophysiological feature of backpack palsy.

Methods : We included 11 patients with brachial plexopathy as a result of wearing a heavy backpack on long distance marches. All patients were done routine blood sampling, chest X-ray, C-spine X-ray and electrophysiological studies.

Results : All patients were right handed person and were not as having a thoracic outlet syndrome. Sensory changes were main initial symptoms and major persistent symptoms were motor weakness. 9 patients(81.8%) were damaged the brachial plexus on non-dominant side, 1 patient was dominant and 1 patient was bilateral involvement. 10 patients(90.9%) were damaged to upper trunk of the brachial plexus by EMG findings.

The prognosis was good, 10 patients(90.9%) were complete recovery during 8 weeks, 1 patient was developed reflex sympathetic dystrophy confirmed by 3-phase bone scan.

Conclusions : Depression of the clavicle and costoclavicular space probably plays a certain role in pathogenic mechanism. The non-dominant side is more frequently affected, probably due to underdevelopment of the musculature in that side.

Key Words : Backpack palsy, Brachial plexopathy

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backpack

Table 1. Patients profile of backpack palsy

Case No.	Age / Sex	Weight of backpack(kg)	Duration of walking(Hr)	Involved site	Involved muscles	Main lesion site of brachial plexus
1	21/M	35	4	left	SS, IS, PM, BB, BC, FS	upper trunk
2	20/M	50	3	left	IS, PM, D, BB	upper trunk
3	28/M	45	4	left	PM, BB, D	upper trunk
4	23/M	30	5	left	D, FS, T, BR	posterior cord
5	21/M	40	3	left	SA, IS, PM, BB, D	upper trunk, LN
6	19/M	30	3	left	SS, IS, PM, D	upper trunk
7	27/M	45	1.5	left	SA, IS, D	upper trunk
8	20/M	40	4	left	IS, PM, BB, BC	upper trunk, LN
9	21/M	40	2	left	SS, IS, D, BR	upper trunk
10	29/M	40	3	left/right	left: SA, SS, PM, D right: PM, BB, D, FS	upper trunk, LN
11	24/F	35	4	right	PM, BB, D, FS	upper trunk

SA; serratus anterior, SS; supraspinatus, IS; infraspinatus, PM; pectoralis major, BB; biceps brachii
 D; deltoid, T; triceps, BC; brachialis, BR; brachioradialis, FS; forearm supinator,
 LN; long thoracic nerve

Table 2. Symptom and sign of backpack palsy

symptom and sign	Number of patient	
sensory change	lateral aspect of arm, only	6
	lateral aspect of arm and forearm	5
motor weakness	abduction of shoulder	11
	flexion of elbow	7
	extension of elbow	1
	supination of forearm	3
	extension of wrist	2

(Neuropack 8, NIHON KOHDEN, Tokyo, Japan) 2 ~ 4

가 . 가 , 가 가 backpack backpack palsy가 가 (Table 1). backpack palsy .

1.

1997 5 2000 12 39.1kg(30 ~ 50kg) 3.3 (1.5 ~ 5) 가 9

11 (81.8%), 가 1 (0.9%), 가

10 , 1 가 1 (0.9%) .

) . , 23 (19 ~ 29 가 9 (81.2%) 2 (18.1%) 11

8 3 (45.5%) 5

Table 3. Prognosis of backpack palsy

	outcome	Number of patients
good prognosis (recovery)	< 4 weeks	3
	< 6 weeks	4
	< 8 weeks	3
poor prognosis		1*

*: development of reflex sympathetic dystrophy

2. , 2 (18.1%) (Table 2). , 3 (27.3%) 가 11 (63.6%) rucksack 11.4kg backpack 3-5

2. 2~4 10 (90.9%) 3 (27.2%) , 17 , 1 (0.9%) 가 , 가 (Table 1). , 40~50kg 39.1kg 1.

3. 10 (90.9%) 8 95% 1 1 (3-phase bone scan) 3- 11 9 (82%) 가 (Table 3). 7

rucksack 가 가 82% 가 18.2% 8

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C₅, C₆

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1,11

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10

11

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8

1

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backpack

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