

— Abstract —

Anterior Subcutaneous Ulnar Nerve Transposition for Cubital Tunnel Syndrome

Young Sik Pyun, M.D., Si Hyun Jeon, M.D., Ki Cheol Bae, M.D. and Kyung Ki Yeo, M.D.

Department of Orthopedic Surgery, School of medicine, Keimyung University, Daegu, Korea

Purpose: To evaluate the clinical results of anterior subcutaneous ulnar nerve transposition operation and the factors that influence the results for cubital tunnel syndrome.

Materials and Methods: Seventeen cases of cubital tunnel syndrome were treated by anterior subcutaneous transposition between March 2001 and December 2003. The mean age was 56 years and mean follow up period was 20.4 months. All patients were reviewed retrospectively. The preoperative evaluation was done by Dellon's classification and the clinical results were evaluated by Messina's classification. We analyzed the effect of the operation and the relations between the results and the preoperative factors, for example, duration of symptom, age, cause of illness, present of association with diabetes mellitus or preoperative flexion contracture of the elbow were analyzed.

Results: The results according to Messina's classification were 4 cases of excellent, 9 cases of good, 3 cases of fair, and 1 case of poor. The preoperative factors like duration of symptom, age, cause of illness and flexion contracture of the elbow didn't show any statistical difference in the result of operation, but the cases which have diabetes mellitus were unsatisfactory with statistical difference ($p=0.018$).

Conclusion: Anterior subcutaneous ulnar nerve transposition is relatively easy and good operative method in cubital tunnel syndrome.

Key Words: Cubital tunnel syndrome, Ulnar nerve, Anterior subcutaneous transposition

:

194

Tel: 053) 250-7729, Fax: 053) 250-7205, E-Mail: bkc@dsmc.or.kr

가 가

가

9,17,18,22)

가 가

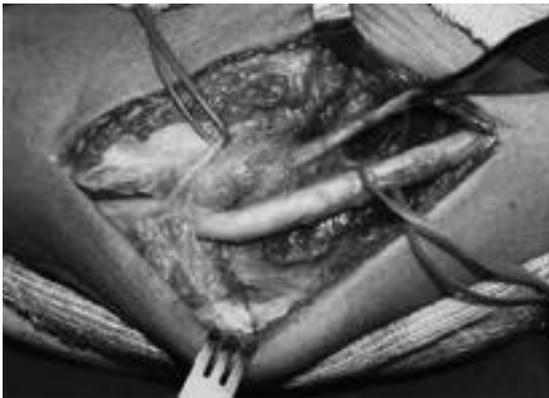


Fig. 1. The ulnar nerve in its original position, posterior to the medial epicondyle.

2001 3 2003 12

17

17 16 1

56(39~69)

15.7(1~48)

20(10~36)

10

1 6

5 3

3 12

10 17 14

10

8 6 mm

(Table 1).

(Fig. 1) Arcade of Struthers (Cubital tunnel retinaculum)



Fig. 2. The sling was made of medial intermuscular septum and the ulnar nerve was transferred anteriorly on flexor-pronator muscle group.



Fig. 3. The transferred ulnar nerve was stabilized by the sling.

(Medial intermuscular septum) (47%) .
 Arcade of Struthers (Nerve conduction velocity and
 (Fig. 2). electromyography, NCV-EMG)
 (Table 3).

(Fig. 3). Messina (Table 4)
 4 , 9 , 3 ,
 가 Dellon (Table 2) 1 Dellon 8
 가 9 (53%), 가 8 2 , 4 , 2

Table 1. Clinical evaluation of patients

Clinical finding	Preoperative	Postoperative
	No. of Pt	No. of Pt
Pain	17	4
Hypoesthesia	10	3
Paresthesia	14	4
Tinnel's sign	12	4
M.atrophy adductor	2	2
interosseous	5	4
hypothenar	7	5
Clawing	3	2
abnormal* two-point discrimination	8	3

*Two-point discrimination of more than 6 mm is considered abnormal.

Table 2. Staging of ulnar nerve compression at the elbow (Dallon)

Mild	
Sensory:	Paresthesias come and go Vibratory perception increased
Motor:	Subjective weakness, clumsiness or loss of coordination
Tests:	Elbow flexion test and/or Tinel's sign may be positive
Moderate	
Sensory:	Paresthesias come and go Vibratory perception normal or decreased
Motor:	Measurable weakness in pinch and/or grip strength
Tests:	Elbow flexion test and/or Tinel's sign are positive Finger crossing may be abnormal
Severe	
Sensory:	Paresthesias are persistent Vibratory peerception decreased Abnormal two-point discrimination (Static 6 mm, moving 4 mm)
Motor:	Measurable weakness in pinch and grip plus muscle atrophy
Test:	Positive elbow flexion test and/or positive Tinel's sign may be present Finger crossing usually abnormal

9, 2, 5, 2, 7, 2, 1, 1 (Table 5). 13 Fibrillation potential 3, 8, 12 1, 9, 2 2 Sensory nerve action potential 가 가 4 (SAP) 7 1, 10 3 5, 1 4, 2, 1 가 7 1 8 2 4 13 가, 4, 1, 1 7 4 10 가, 1 9 3 7 가 2, 5, 2 5 6 mm 10 3, (Table 1). 4, 2, 1 6 NCV-EMG NCV가 45 m/s 12 1, 5 3 2, 1 60 2, 5, 60 2, 4, 3, 1 5 2, 1 (Table 6). 가 (p=0.018)

Table 3. Summary of the preoperative electromyographic (EMG) findings

EMG finding	number of pt.
NCV* < 45 m/s	12
Polyphasic MUP**	4
Absence of SAP***	7
Fibrillation potential	13

* NCV: nerve conduction velocity
 ** MUP: motor unit potential
 *** SAP: Sensory nerve action potential

Table 4. Messina Classification after operation

Good	general resolution of symptom but occasional tenderness at the incision site mild residual decreased sensibility, residual motor weakness
Fair	Improved after surgery but with persistent sensory changes, residual motor loss, muscle wasting, persistent claw deformity
Poor	No improvement after the surgical procedure or worse

Table 5. Summary of the postoperative results

	moderate	severe	total
Excellent	2 (22.2%)	2 (25%)	4 (23.5%)
Good	5 (55.6%)	4 (50%)	9 (52.9%)
Fair	1 (11.1%)	2 (25%)	3 (17.6%)
Poor	1 (11.1%)	0	1 (5.9%)
Total (%)	9 (100%)	8 (100%)	17 (100%)

24)

가 16)

가 4,5)가

Dellon⁴⁾ 가 4) Messina Messina⁹⁾

Arcade of Struthers 23) 60%

가 가 가

EMG NCV- 4,7,13,14,17) 가

21), 26), 12), 22), 10,25)

4,11,12,15,16,21,22) 가 8,13,20,24)

Table 6. Summary of the postoperative results according to preoperative factors

	excellant	good	fair	poor
Symptom duration				
>1year	2	4	1	1
<1year	2	5	2	0
osteoarthritis	3	4	2	1
idiopathic	1	5	0	0
cubitus valgus	0	0	1	0
Flexion contracture	2	1	0	0
DM	0	2	2	1
M. atrophy	3	4	2	1
Tinnel's sign	1	9	2	0
NCV-EMG				
NCV (<45 m/s)	2	7	2	1
fibrillation potential	3	8	2	0
absence of SAP	1	5	1	0

Macnicol¹⁷⁾

가 가 가 가
9) 가 가 가

, Matsuzaki¹⁸⁾

가 가 가 가
가 가 3 2 , 1

가 가 가 가

6) 1 가

가 가 가

가

3)

가 가 가 가
가 5 가 가
10 가 가

가

REFERENCES

Adelaar¹⁾ Apfelberg Larson²⁾
가 가 가
가

- 1) Adelaar RS, Foster WC and McDowell C: The treatment of cubital tunnel syndrome. *J Hand surg*, 9-A: 90-95, 1984.
- 2) Apfelberg DB and Larson SJ: Dynamic anatomy of the ulnar nerve at elbow. *Plast & Reconstr surg*, 51:76-81, 1973.
- 3) Campbell WC: Arthroplasty of the elbow. *Ann Surg*, 76:615-631, 1922.

- 4) **Dellon AL**: Review of treatment results for ulnar nerve entrapment at the elbow. *J Hand Surg*, 14-A:688-700, 1989.
- 5) **Dellon AL, Hament W and Gittelshon A**: Non-operative management of cubital tunnel syndrome: An 8-year prospective study. *Neurology*, 43:1673-1677, 1993.
- 6) **Dellon AL and Mackinon SE**: Validity of nerve conduction velocity studies after anterior transposition of ulnar nerve. *J Hand Surg*, 12-A:700-703, 1987.
- 7) **Eversmann WW**: Entrapment and compression neuropathies. *Operative hand surgery*. Churchill Livingstone Inc, New York. Ed. 3, 1341-1386, 1993.
- 8) **Gelberman RH, Yamaguchi K, Hollstien SB, Winn SS, Heidenreich FP, Bindra RR, Hsieh P and Silva MJ**: Changes in interstitial pressure and cross-sectional area of the cubital tunnel and of the ulnar nerve with flexion of the elbow. *J Bone Joint Surg*, 80-A:492-501, 1998.
- 9) **Han SH, Shin KH, Kang ES, Hahn SB and Kang HJ**: Operative treatment of Tardy ulnar nerve palsy. *J Korean Orthop*, 38:417-420, 2003.
- 10) **Hashiguchi H, Ito H and Sawaizumi T**: Stabilized subcutaneous transposition of the ulnar nerve. *International orthop*, 27:232-234, 2003.
- 11) **Heithoff SJ**: Cubital tunnel syndrome does not require transposition of the ulnar nerve. *J Hand Surg*, 24-A:898-905, 1999.
- 12) **King T and Morgan FP**: Late results of removing the medial humeral epicondyle for traumatic ulnar neuritis. *J Bone Joint Surg*, 41-B:51-55, 1959.
- 13) **Kleinman WB**: Cubital tunnel syndrome: anterior transposition as a logical approach to complete nerve decompression. *J Hand Surg*, 24-A:886-897, 1999.
- 14) **Lascar T and Laulan J**: Cubital tunnel syndrome: a retrospective review of 53 anterior subcutaneous transposition. *J Hand Surg*, 25-B:453-456, 2000.
- 15) **Learmonth JR**: A technique for transplanting the ulnar nerve. *Surg Gynec Obstet*, 75:792-793, 1942.
- 16) **Lundborg G**: Surgical treatment for ulnar nerve entrapment at the elbow. *J Hand Surg*, 17-B:245-247, 1992.
- 17) **Macnicol MF**: The results of operation for ulnar neuritis. *J Bone Joint Surg*, 61-B: 159-164, 1979.
- 18) **Matsuzaki H, Yoshizu T, Maki Y, Tsubokawa N, Yamamoto Y and Toishi S**: Long-term clinical and neurologic recovery in the hand after surgery for severe cubital tunnel syndrome. *J Hand Surg*, 29-A:373-378, 2004.
- 19) **Messina A and Messina JC**: Transposition of the ulnar nerve and its vascular bundle for the entrapment syndrome at the elbow. *J Hand Surg*, 20-B:638-648, 1995.
- 20) **Moon ES and Park SJ**: Surgical treatment for ulnar nerve palsy at elbow. *J Korean Orthop*, 35:939-943, 2000.
- 21) **Osborne GV**: The surgical treatment of tardy ulnar neuritis. *J Bone Joint Surg*, 39-B:782, 1957.
- 22) **Osterman AL and Davis CA**: Subcutaneous transposition of the ulnar nerve for treatment of cubital tunnel syndrome. *Hand Clinics*, 12:421-433, 1996.
- 23) **Posner MA**: Compressive ulnar neuropathies at the elbow. *J Am Acad orthop Surg*, 6:282-297, 1988.
- 24) **Rogers MR, Bergfield TG and Aulicino PL**: The failed ulnar nerve transposition: Etiology and treatment. *Clin Orthop*, 269:193-200, 1991.
- 25) **Sohn HM, Ha SH, You JW, Lee JY and Oh SJ**: Surgical treatment of cubital tunnel syndrome with subcutaneous anterior transposition of the ulnar nerve. *J Korean Orthop*, 38:305-308, 2003.
- 26) **Siegel DB**: Submuscular transposition of the ulnar nerve. *Hand Clinics*, 12:445-448, 1996.