

ARTHROSCOPIC LAVAGE AND MUSCLES DETACHMENT FOR PAINFUL TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINTS

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ABSTRACT :

Patients complain of painful temporomandibular joints (TMJ) represent a continuous challenge to dental practitioners. Multiple conservative and invasive procedures had been suggested to alleviate such pain. In this report, 17 patients with painful TMJs were included. All patients had occlusal splint therapy for 12 weeks before being considered as candidates for arthroscopy and muscles detachment. After 6 months follow up, 16 patients showed significant improvement in TMJ pain and maximal interincisal opening. The procedure seems to be an alternative to arthrotomy in some patients with persistent TMJs pain.

INTRODUCTION:

The issue of painful TMJ has aroused a great deal of controversy as regarding its nature and management. Historically, Costen (1934, 1936)^(1,2) attributed pain in TMJ patients to impingement of the posteriorly displaced condyle on the post articular nerves. Schwartz (1960)⁽³⁾ focused attention on masticatory muscles and related TMJ pain to spasm and muscles incoordination rather than to any derangement of articulation. Structural derangement of the TMJ as a source of joint pain was suggested long ago by Annandale (1887)⁽⁴⁾, who attributed joint pain to anterior displacement of the articular disc. Internal derangement of the TMJ in the form of anterior disc displacement permits the condyle to hit the sensory nerve rich-retrodiscal tissue with subsequent pain⁽⁵⁾.

More recently, identification of chemical mediators as prostaglandin E2 (PGE2) and leukotriene B4 (LTB4) in the synovial fluid of painful TMJs raised the question of the role of these mediators in the pathology of painful TMJs.^(6,7,8) Painful TMJs have been managed by varieties of treatment modalities, ranging from simple conservative remedies to radical arthrotomy surgeries. The purpose of different management procedures is to alleviate joint pain and associated dysfunctional symptoms if present⁽⁹⁾. Conservative methods included different therapeutic modalities as drugs in the form of analgesics, anti-inflammatory agents, muscle relaxants and tranquilizers to alleviate joint pain⁽¹⁰⁾. Certain therapeutic exercises to relax the masticatory muscles and unload the joint were also described⁽¹¹⁾. Occlusal splints with different designs

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