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Facial Palsy Secondary to Mandibular Condyle Fracture Surgery. A Physiotherapy Approach Case Report

Cristina Molas-Ferrer

NYU Langone Orthopedic Center, USA

Abstract

Introduction

There is still controversy of efficacy between surgical and nonsurgical management of mandibular condyle fracture. Generally, there is consensus in operating significant dislocation and displacement cases1. Even though different approaches have been studied to minimize the side effects 2, 3 facial palsy frequently appears secondary to intervention, commonly diminishing by itself in a period of 6 months4. However, how do we manage the patient during this period? Can physiotherapy help in recovery?

The purpose of this case report is to present the clinical and photographic evaluation and management of a women who suffered a facial trauma resulting in mandibular condyle fracture with angulation and luxation. One-year follow-up results are also presented.

Case report

A 23-year-old women attending physiotherapy sessions two weeks after having undergone emergency surgery of a mandibular right condyle fracture after falling from a bicycle.

The surgeons used a preauricular and cervical approach (Risdon) in order to perform a condyle replacement and osteosynthesis fixed. Initially she presented right facial palsy with complete paresis of the frontal branch and upper buccal part of the facial nerve, and a light paresis in the zygomatic branch. The marginal and the buccal lower branches are preserved.

Discussion

Even though total spontaneous recovery timing is estimated to 6 months, patients generally do not have any medical support or follow up assistance during that period. Patient education and management of expectations are crucial. Rehabilitation goals must be centred on individual functional, aesthetic and emotional levels5. Patients experience fears and concerns about their recovery and anxiety regarding the management of the injury, which negatively interfere and affect their daily lives6.

Physiotherapy intervention by means of rehabilitation techniques and patient education can aid this process.

Conclusion

It seems that physiotherapy can help patients to assume greater control in their own recovery, resulting in an improvement of the physical function, an increase in self-esteem, personal satisfaction and better quality of life.

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***Corresponding author:** Cristina Molas-Ferrer, NYU Langone Orthopedic Center, USA; Email: bethany.ridenhour(at)nyulangone.org

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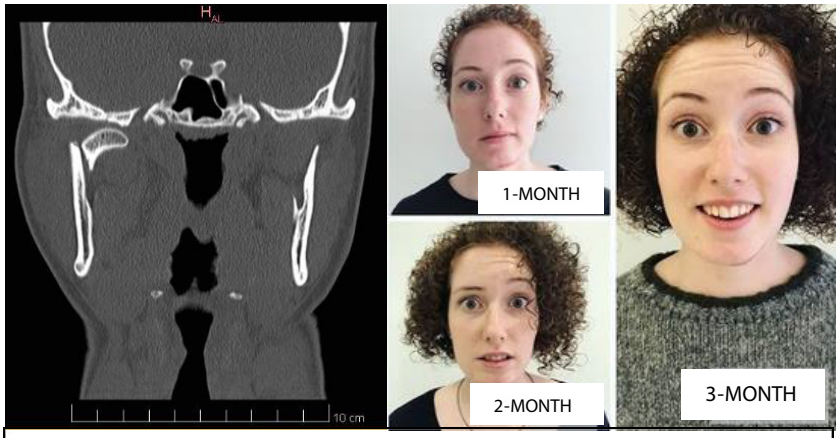

Figure 1: on the left, an image from CT before surgery. On the right, facia expressionpictures due to recovery assessment after surgery with physiotherapist treatment.

Figure

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