Charcot Neuroarthropathy and Workers Compensation Denials in HealthCare

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Disclosures - No Conflict to Disclose

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We have no potential conflicts with this presentation.
Charcot Neuroarthropathy and Workers Compensation Denials

Background

- Charcot arthropathy is a result of neuropathy
- most commonly affects midfoot and ankle
- most patients are diabetics in the United States
- 1% of diabetics develop Charcot
- bilateral in 35%
- The multifactorial causality of Charcot arthropathy results in uncertainty in Worker’s Compensation claims.
Charcot Neuroarthropathy and Workers Compensation Denials

Background

- Trigger for Charcot unknown
  - Neurotraumatic- lack of painful stimuli results in repetitive microtrauma
  - Neurovascular- hypervascular state secondary to loss of autonomic regulation leads to demineralization of bone

- Increased damage results in an increase in inflammatory cytokines stimulating osteoclast production and osteolysis
  - IL-1 and TNFα infiltrate area
  - Leads to increased NF-κB through RANKL/RANK pathway
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Objective

• Determine the incidence of diabetics, peripheral neuropathy, and Charcot patients in a tertiary foot and ankle clinic with Worker’s Compensation claims and determine the relationship between health status and coverage denials.
Methods

• Payment records were reviewed to identify Workers Compensation patients in a tertiary Foot and Ankle clinic over 4 years.

• Chart review identified patients with diabetes, peripheral neuropathy and Charcot neuropathy

• Payment records reviewed for payment denials

• Coverage denials for proposed services were not included
Results

- 331 workers compensation patients with Foot and Ankle complaints
- 286 controls - 115 appeals
- 43 (13%) diabetics - 23 appeals
- 9 (3%) peripheral neuropathy - 8 appeals
- 3 (1%) Charcot patients - 6 appeals
Conclusion

• Diabetes did not increase the rate of denials
• Peripheral neuropathy doubled rate of denials
• Charcot increase rate of denials eight times
• Charcot arthropathy and peripheral neuropathy are strong indicators an increased denials
• This data only reflects appeals of claims for services provided and does not reflect difficulty with obtaining approvals for planned procedures.