The Role of Arthroscopic Debridement after Ankle Fractures Treated with ORIF
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Introduction/Purpose: The role of ankle arthroscopy in managing the consequences of ankle fractures is yet to be fully established. This study aims to assess this procedure in terms of the accuracy of preoperative diagnosis, re-operation rate and patient-reported outcomes.

Methods: We compared two homogeneous groups of 16 patients (32 in total, average age 40.6 years) operated for a fracture of the distal tibia and/or fibula treated with ORIF. For all fractures the AO classification was used. The baseline was 6 months after surgery. Inclusion criteria were: patients aged between 19 and 50, a pre-trauma Tegner score >3, FAOS score <75 at the baseline, R.O.M. <20° vs contralateral; we included patients with well-aligned osteosynthesis and with radiographic union. Patients with open fractures, with osteochondral lesions and with previous were excluded. In the first group we planned an arthroscopy of the ankle from 6 to 12 months after trauma, in the second group, we continued with conservative rehabilitation treatment. All patients were then re-evaluated at 3, 6 and 12 months with questionnaires (Tegner activity level, and FAOS). The mean follow-up was 18.2 months. For all data statistical analysis was performed.

Results: The results of our case-series showed excellent patient satisfaction (12/14) with a FAOS Score and an improved R.O.M. statistically significant (p <.001) in patients treated with ankle arthroscopy. Eighty percent was able to return to previous activity. The average time until return to sport was 5.3 ± 2.4 months. Seventy percent of the athletes still had occasional pain with sport.

Conclusion: The literature on arthroscopic treatment after fracture is still poor but results obtained, even with a limited number of cases, and with a short follow-up, are positive, especially in those patients where the functional demand is highest.

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