

FLEXOR TENDON DEGENERATION: DOES IT INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME OF OPEN TRIGGER FINGER RELEASE?

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Introduction: Flexor tendon degeneration in trigger finger may be caused by repeated frictions of flexor tendon and narrow-restricted A1 pulley. In open trigger finger release, we often found features of tendon degeneration, however, the association between tendon degeneration and the surgical outcome was unknown. This study attempts to assess the association between flexor tendon degeneration and the outcome of open trigger finger release.

Methodology: From February 2017 to August 2018, open trigger releases were performed under local anesthesia in 136 patients (162 digits). Fourteen patients (20 digits) defaulted follow-up. Intraoperatively, flexor tendons were inspected for degeneration features. Patients were assessed preoperatively, then at first, third and sixth months for; pain score, the active motion of joints, grip and pinch strength, DASH score, and complications.

Discussion: We identified seven macroscopic features of degenerations; including irregular surface, fraying, intertendinous tear, nodule, synovial thickening, hyperaemia, and adhesions. Total 117 fingers (72.2%) had tendon degeneration feature(s) while other 45 fingers were normal (27.8%). No significant difference in both outcomes and complication rates in both groups. There was no significant correlation between severity of tendon degeneration and the outcome of open trigger finger release.

Conclusion: Flexor tendinopathy did not correlate with trigger finger severity and the outcome of open trigger finger release. Open trigger finger release has a high success rate despite severe flexor tendon degeneration.