

A HINGED EXTERNAL FIXATOR FOR NEGLECTED CHRONIC ELBOW DISLOCATION: A RARE CASE REPORT

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Introduction: The elbow joint is the second most commonly dislocated joint in adults with an incidence of 20% of all articular dislocations. The treatment of neglected elbow dislocation is more complicated than acute cases.

Discussion: A 20-year-old gentleman with history of fall during childhood about 18 years ago presented with deformity and severe restriction in movement of the right elbow. X-ray (Fig: 1) showed an elbow dislocation with no associated fractures. Patient underwent open reduction and hinged external fixation where the elbow was exposed with lateral longitudinal incision. The joint capsule was released anteriorly and posteriorly. The joint was not stable with movements after the reduction. A hinged elbow fixator is applied with 2 Schanz screw to distal humerus and 2 Schanz screws to the proximal ulna. On the postoperative 3rd day elbow ROM exercises were started with the help of the hinge system of the fixator. The long term follow-up of our patient has satisfactory results with good functional outcome. Chronic elbow dislocation is a highly disabling condition to be treated and to provide a successful functional outcome. The fixator keeps the joint distracted to prevent cartilage weakening and also, the capsules and muscles can be maintained to an adequate length to prevent stiffness of elbow. Fig: 1. Fig: 2

Conclusion: The treatment of neglected cases is quite challenging. The hinged external fixator is an excellent device for the healing of ligament reconstruction and for simultaneous early mobilization.