

Incomplete meniscal healing in early second-look arthroscopy does not indicate failure of repair: a case series

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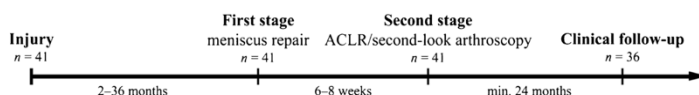
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INTRODUCTION

To assess if incomplete meniscal healing during second-look arthroscopy at six to eight weeks after all-inside suture hook meniscus repair results in longer-term failure of repair in patients with restored knee stability.

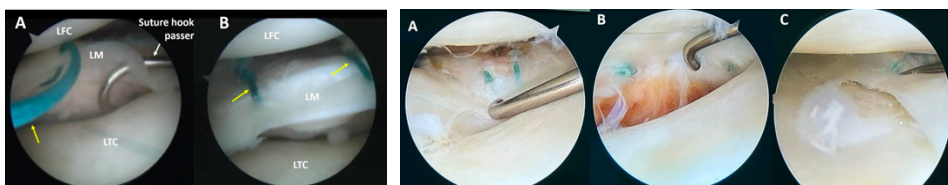
METHODS

From 2008 to 2013, 41 patients with post-traumatic, longitudinal, vertical, complete meniscal tears with concomitant ACL injury were treated via a two-stage surgical procedure and prospectively evaluated. In the first stage, all-inside meniscus repair was performed using suture hook passers and non-absorbable sutures. In total, there were 26 medial and 16 lateral meniscus tears. A second-stage ACL reconstruction, performed six to eight weeks later, served as an early second-look arthroscopic evaluation of meniscal healing. Clinical follow-up was performed at a minimum of 24 months.



RESULTS

Second-look arthroscopy revealed 31 cases (75.6%) of complete and ten cases (24.4%) of incomplete meniscal healing. Two patients were lost prior to follow-up, and three were excluded due to recurrent instability. Therefore, 36 patients were assessed at the final follow-up. All patients with complete meniscal healing during second-look arthroscopy achieved clinical success at follow-up. Six out of nine (66.7%) of patients with incomplete meniscal healing during second-look arthroscopy achieved clinical success at follow-up ($p = 0.012$). One saphenous neuropathy occurred (2.4%).



CONCLUSION

Incomplete meniscal healing during early second-look arthroscopy after all-inside meniscal repair using suture hook passers and non-absorbable sutures did not necessarily result in longer-term failure in patients with restored knee stability. The described method of meniscal repair was associated with a low rate of symptomatic re-tears and complications.

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