Functional impact of hemophilic arthropathy

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Introduction.– Chronic arthropathy causes severe functional disability in adult hemophiliacs. The knee is the joint most frequently affected. Progress in knee prostheses and better control of bleeding disorders by anti-hemophilic factors have broadened the indication of hemophilia total knee replacement for the treatment of arthritis. We present two cases illustrating the long-term functional outcome and quality of life (QOL) observed after double total knee arthroplasty (TKA).

Cases reports.–

Case 1:– Mr. W. S., aged 40, was followed for hemophilia B. He presented recurrent episodes of hemorrhaxis treated by repeated transfusions of fresh frozen plasma, leading to an irreducible flexion of 45° at both knees radiographs revealed bilateral destructive arthropathy. The patient underwent double TKA followed by functional rehabilitation while on antihaemophilic factor. The functional outcome was satisfactory with flexion at 95° and extension at 0°. The SF-36 showed a significant improvement in QOL especially in the field of physical activity.

Case 2:– Mr. A., aged 30 years, was followed for hemophilia A. He experienced repeated episodes of hemorrhaxis treated with fresh frozen plasma. The clinical course was marked by ankylosis of both knees to 90° flexion requiring implantation of a double TKA. Radiographs of the knee showed a destructive arthropathy bilaterally. Following postoperative rehabilitation, the patient recovered range of motion in both knees with flexion 100° on the right and 110° on the left, the extension was 0° at both knees The SF-36 QOL score was significantly improved.

Discussion.– After failure of conservative treatment, total knee arthroplasty is an alternative treatment for severe hemophilic arthropathy. Pain relief is constant in most cases, but the gain in range of motion after prosthetic has varied greatly in earlier reports. In the literature, several authors report an improvement in quality of life of hemophilia patients after knee replacement; this is also noted in our two patients.