Comparative Cost of Surgical and Nonsurgical Treatment of Acute Achilles Tendon Rupture

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The authors declare a conflict of interest exists in respect to…

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OBJECTIVES

BACKGROUND

• Despite its prevalence, treatment of acute achilles tendon rupture remains controversial

• Prospective clinical trial have demonstrated similar long term outcomes when a functional rehabilitation protocol is utilized 2,4,5,6

• Surgical treatment allows for earlier return to work/sports 3,5,6,7 but increased risk for wound morbidity 1,2,3,6,7,9

PURPOSE

• Perform a cost analysis comparing operative and non-operative treatment of acute achilles tendon ruptures
MATERIALS & METHODS

• The study received exemption status following IRB review
• Retrospective, single institution
• 13 consecutive adult patients with acute achilles tendon ruptures treated from June 1st 2014 to January 1st 2016
• All patients participated in the same functional rehabilitation protocol
• 6 treated non-operatively, 7 treated operatively
• All patients had 1 year follow-up
RESULTS

- Operative treatment resulted in 3.7 times higher cost of total care compared to non-operative treatment.
RESULTS

- Surgeon charges were 3.3 times higher in the operative treatment group.
RESULTS

- The number of physician visits was significantly lower in the operative group (p = .04)
RESULTS

• The number of RVUs produced was not significantly different between treatment groups (p = .13)
CONCLUSIONS

• Surgical treatment of acute achilles tendon rupture is associated with increased cost and higher surgeon charges compared to nonsurgical care.

• There was no difference in RVUs between treatment groups

• This study questions the cost-effectiveness of operative treatment for acute achilles tendon ruptures given long-term studies demonstrating equivalent 1 year patient outcomes