Rare case of the fracture of the lateral border of the scapula associated with lesion of the brachial plexus: a case report

Abdellatif Benabbouha1, Adil Lamkhanter

1Service de Chirurgie Orthopédique et Traumatologique I, Hôpital Militaire d’Instruction Mohamed V, Rabat, Maroc

Corresponding author: Abdellatif Benabbouha, Service de Chirurgie Orthopédique et Traumatologique I, Hôpital Militaire d’Instruction Mohamed V, Rabat, Maroc

Key words: Scapula, fracture, injury, brachial plexus

Received: 06/03/2016 - Accepted: 26/04/2016 - Published: 28/04/2016


This article is available online at: http://www.panaf rican-med-journal.com/content/article/23/249/full/

© Abdellatif Benabbouha et al. The Pan African Medical Journal - ISSN 1937-8688. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Image in medicine

Scapular fractures are considered a very unusual injury, among studies in adults they account for 1-3% of all fractures, and 5% of fractures involving the shoulder, because the anatomic location and the soft tissues protect the scapula. Consequently, they are usually caused by high-energy vesicular trauma or by falling from a height. Conservative treatment commonly produces good or excellent results. We report a very rare case of a fracture of the lateral border of the scapula associated with lesion of the brachial plexus. A 38-year-old man injured his left shoulder in a traffic accident. In his physical examination, there was a deficit partial nervous of the brachial plexus. The X-ray examination revealed a displaced fracture of the lateral border of the scapula. A computed tomography scan with 3D reconstruction confirmed the diagnosis. Electromyographic examination two weeks after the injury showed a compression of the brachial plexus. The fracture was treated conservatively. By 4 months after the injury there was further improvement in both sensory and motor function, and by 8 months there was sensation in the autonomous zones of both median and ulnar nerves and good return of muscle power.

Figure 1: A) radiograph of the left shoulder demonstrating fracture of the lateral border of the scapula; B and C) tomography scan with 3D reconstruction confirmed the diagnosis