Rehabilitation and Management of Elderly Circular Saw Injuries- Findings from a Single-Center Study in NE UK

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Abstract:

Objective: To identify patterns, surgical management, and rehabilitation of DIY hand injuries in individuals aged 65 or older, and to inform better prevention and management strategies.

Methods: A prospective observational study was conducted on patients aged 65 or older with DIY-related hand injuries who attended our hand unit at County Durham and Darlington University Hospital from July 2017 to January 2022. We documented injuries, treatment procedures, and follow-ups. Functional outcomes were measured using the Quick Disability of Arm, Shoulder, and Hand (Quick DASH) score.

Results: Nineteen patients (aged 66-94, mean 72) were included. Injuries comprised 15-digit amputations, two flexor tendon divisions, one thumb degloving injury, and one open comminuted metacarpal fracture. Eight of the 15 amputations were successfully replanted or revascularized. Others were terminalized, with two converted to local flap reconstruction and one to bone grafting. Rehabilitation averaged 10 months for replantations and 5 months for tendon repairs. MCID Quick DASH scores ranged from 7.8 to 56.8. At follow-up, 16 patients were independent, two were partially dependent, and one required full social care.

Conclusion: Hand injuries in the elderly significantly impact quality of life and necessitate long-term rehabilitation. Education and preventive measures are essential to reduce the incidence and burden on patients and the NHS.

Keywords:

Elderly hand injuries, Circular saw accidents, DIY injuries rehabilitation, Quick DASH score, Replantation outcomes.