

Table 3

Author, date, and country	Patient group	Study type (level of evidence)	Outcomes	Key results	Study weaknesses
Brown <i>et al</i> , 1973, Australia ¹	4 children 18 months–3 years	Case reports	Rhythm Blood pressure	Normalised Normalised	
Brown <i>et al</i> , 1976, Australia ²	12 children 15 months–12 years with arrhythmias Sodium bicarbonate 0.5–2 mEq/kg	Observational	Rhythm	9/12 reverted to sinus rhythm	
Koppel <i>et al</i> , 1992, Germany ³	184 cases of overdose 8 patients with cardiac disturbance 100 mmol of sodium bicarbonate	Observational	Rhythm	4/8 reverted to sinus rhythm	
Hoffman <i>et al</i> , 1993, USA ⁴	91 patients with overdose Sodium bicarbonate to a pH of 7.55	Observational	Rhythm Blood pressure	39/49 improved 20/21 normalised	

Clinical bottom line

On current best evidence alkalinisation to a pH of 7.55 appears to be appropriate treatment for patients with dysrhythmias after tricyclic overdose.

- 1 Brown TCK, Barker ME, Dunlop ME, *et al*. The use of sodium bicarbonate in the treatment of tricyclic antidepressant-induced arrhythmias. *Anaesth Intensive Care* 1973;1:203–10.

- 2 Brown TCK. Sodium bicarbonate treatment for tricyclic antidepressant arrhythmias in children *Med J Aust* 1976;ii:380–2.

- 3 Koppel C, Wiegrefe A, Tenczer J. Clinical course, therapy, outcome and analytical data in amitriptyline and combined amitriptyline/chlordiazepoxide overdose. *Human Exp Toxicol* 1992;11:458–65.

- 4 Hoffman JR, Votey SR, Bayer M, *et al*. Effect of hypertonic sodium bicarbonate in the treatment of moderate-to-severe cyclic antidepressant overdose. *Am J Emerg Med* 1993;11:336–41.

Collar and cuff or sling after fracture of the clavicle

Report by Simon Carley, *Clinical Fellow*
Search checked by Kevin Mackway-Jones, *Consultant*

Clinical scenario

A 23 year old male presents to the emergency department after a fall on the outstretched hand. Radiography reveals a mid-clavicular fracture. You know that a figure of eight bandage is of no benefit but are unsure whether a sling or a collar and cuff gives the best outcome.

Three part question

In [young patients with simple clavicle fractures] is [collar and cuff better than broad arm sling] at [reducing pain and reducing time to recovery]?

Search strategy

Medline 1966 to 12/98 using the OVID interface. ([exp immobilization OR exp bandages OR collar and cuff.mp OR broad arm sling\$.mp] AND {[exp clavicle OR clavicle\$.mp OR clavicular.mp] AND [exp fractures OR fracture\$.mp]}) LIMIT to human AND english language.

Search outcome

Twenty papers were found none of which were relevant.

Comment

There is no literature on the use of collar and cuff or sling in simple clavicular fracture.

Clinical bottom line

There is no evidence to determine whether a collar and cuff is better than a sling for management of simple clavicular fractures. Local advice should be followed and the comfort of the patient must be taken into account.

Curettage or silver nitrate for pyogenic granulomas on the hand

Report by Wendy Dollery, *Specialist Registrar*
Search checked by Vince Choudrey, *Clinical Fellow*

Clinical scenario

A 23 year old woman attends the emergency department with a strange growth on the end of her finger. She cut herself on glass some six weeks previously. Examination reveals a lesion with the appearance of a pyogenic granuloma. You wonder whether you should remove the lump surgically or chemically.

Three part question

In [an adult with a pyogenic granuloma on the hand] is [curettage better than cautery with silver nitrate] at [removing the lesion and preventing recurrence]?

Search strategy

Medline 1966 to 12/98 using the OVID interface. [exp granuloma OR granuloma\$.mp OR granuloma, pyogenic OR granuloma, pyogenic.mp OR exp hemangioma, capillary OR capillary hemangioma\$.mp] AND [exp hand OR exp thumb OR exp fingers OR hand\$.mp OR thumb.mp OR finger\$.mp OR digit\$.mp].