

Knees Deserve More Adoration in Obstetrics: A Case of Unilateral Common Fibular Nerve Injury Following Repetitive Lithotomy Positioning in Peripartum



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Introduction

- Obstetric neurological injuries have an incidence of 0.9-2.0% and sciatic and femoral nerve injuries are the commonest.
- Common fibular nerve is less affected and usually associated with prolonged lithotomy compressing knees by stirrups, incorrect positioning without proper equipment and hyper-flexed knees.

Objectives

- To describe the presentation, assessment and management of common fibular nerve neurapraxia in a postpartum mother.

Case

- A 26-year-old woman with unremarkable antenatal, medical and surgical history had a forceps delivery performed under pudendal block in lithotomy for prolonged 2nd stage. It was followed by manual removal of placenta in theatre under spinal anaesthesia.
- She developed right sided foot drop with poor dorsiflexion and numbness over dorsum of foot and lateral lower leg six hours post-delivery.
- Subsequently, she underwent neurology and anaesthetic reviews for possible right common fibular nerve injury secondary to mechanical compression by stirrups or spinal anaesthesia related complication.

Results

- She underwent MRI spine which excluded epidural haematoma and other compressive spinal cord lesions.
- The mother was managed conservatively with ongoing physiotherapy and occupational therapy reviews, and she made a remarkable progress with 2-wheel gutter frame assisted ambulation while inpatient.
- She was discharged on 4th postpartum day for outpatient follow-up.
- This case underwent institutional risk management process.

Discussion & Conclusion

- Peripheral neuropathies in postpartum needs prompt attention to rule out regional anaesthesia related complications and to commence therapy early for optimum functional outcome.
- Precise positioning with proper technique to avoid excessive compression of nerve at fibular head is the key to prevent common fibular nerve injury.

References

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Disclosure

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare