

INTRAARTICULAR FIBROUS BAND OF THE ANKLE, A FREQUENTLY MISSED LESION

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Introduction: Ankle injury is a common disorder in orthopedic field. Inappropriate diagnosis may lead to mismanagement and ultimately causing permanent disability. Intraarticular fibrous band is rare but is commonly formed after ankle sprain or fracture. Clinical diagnosis is difficult and MRI is less sensitive in detecting the fibrous band. In this case report, we detected a fibrous band lesion during arthroscopic treatment of Anterior Talo-Fibular Ligament(ATFL).

Discussion: A 20 year old Rugby player presented to our clinic with right ankle pain and swelling after contact injury while playing rugby. Her right ankle was twisted in inverted position. She was unable to continue the game and had pain on weight bearing. At physical examination, there was tenderness over distal fibula and restricted ankle plantar flexion. Anterior drawer test was negative, however varus stress test was positive. Standard anteroposterior and lateral radiographs showed avulsion fracture of ATFL of the right ankle. MRI confirmed the diagnosis, however could not detect any other abnormality. The patient was scheduled for arthroscopic modified Bostrum procedure of the Right ATFL. During the operation, a web-like intraarticular fibrous band was discovered extending from anterolateral aspect of tibia plafond to medial malleolus. After removing the band, articular erosion was noted over the talar dome, a sign of impingement of the band over the talar surface.

Conclusion: The first description of fibrous band was by McGinty et al in his report of arthroscopic assessment of undiagnosed painful ankle. Fibrous bands are distinct cord-like fibrous tissue structures firmly adherent at each end to bone, articular surface or capsulo-ligamentous tissue, as described by Stienstra et al. Failing to detect and remove the fibrous band in a symptomatic ankle may lead to progressive articular erosion and subsequently permanent disability. Although this disorder is rare, one must consider it as a differential diagnosis of persistent ankle pain.