

A Rare Case of Isolated Acromion Fracture

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INTRODUCTION:

The acromion process is the lateral projection of the spine of scapula. Fracture of the acromion process is rare in orthopaedics and accounts for only 8% of all scapula fractures¹. This fracture is usually associated with concomitant skeletal and soft tissue injuries of the shoulder. We present a case with an isolated displaced fracture of the acromial base and his treatment up to 4 weeks post-trauma.

REPORT:

A 34-year-old male, right hand dominant, sustained an injury to the right shoulder from a motor-vehicle accident with his right shoulder landing onto the road and presented with pain and mild swelling and abrasion wound over the right shoulder. Both active and passive shoulder movements was painful. There was local tenderness over the region of the acromion process of the right shoulder with no neurovascular compromise. Radiograph of the right shoulder revealed a minimally displaced fracture of the acromion process, which was managed conservatively with arm sling. Upon review at 4 weeks post-trauma, pain resolved, no tenderness elicited at right shoulder. Active and passive movement was full. X-ray at 4 weeks showed callus with no displacement of fracture.

DISCUSSION:

Isolated fracture of the acromion process is rare as they have been commonly reported with associated fractures around the shoulder girdle. Acromion fractures can be classified according to Kuhn classification². This fracture is consistent with a Type II pattern, whereby it is displaced, with no reduction in subacromial space. While type II fractures can be managed conservatively, they require regular follow-up, to monitor for union or displacement which may require surgical intervention. In this case, the patient was treated conservatively with positive results.

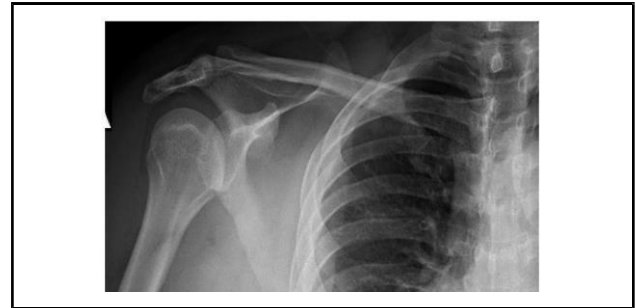


Figure 1: X-ray on day of trauma

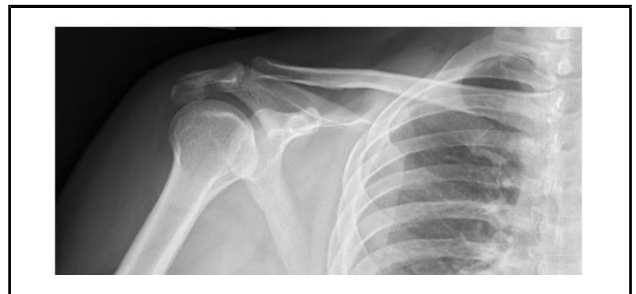


Figure 2: X-ray 4 weeks post-trauma

CONCLUSION:

While acromion fractures are rare, cases of shoulder trauma should be examined carefully for possible scapular process fractures. Although most of these fractures heal uneventfully, the worst outcomes have been reported with fractures that are displaced. Hence, it is important to identify isolated acromion fracture and vigilantly follow-up to monitor for displacement.

REFERENCES:

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2. Kuhn JE, et al. Fracture of the acromion process: a proposed classification system. J Orthop Trauma 1994;8:6–13.