

Ilizarov Fixation For Elbow Conditions

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The anatomical and biomechanical properties of the elbow present unique challenges to the Orthopaedic surgeon. The elbow joint comprises not of just one joint but three and this should be kept in mind during management of elbow conditions. Because of its anatomy, the windows through which fixation may be done are limited. Likewise, the elbow is notorious for early joint stiffness. The Ilizarov circular frame external fixator is known for its modularity and versatility. Orthopaedic surgeons can utilize the adaptability of the Ilizarov fixator when confronted with complicated elbow pathologies. Neglected elbow pathologies requiring stabilization and at the same allowing early joint motion is possible by fashioning the Ilizarov fixator to a hinged fixator. A prime example is neglected elbow dislocation. A minor modification in the holes in the Ilizarov ring allows easier and more accurate placement of the hinge along the axis of the joint. The use of this external fixator can also combined with minimal internal fixation should this be necessary as in comminuted intra-articular fractures. And should everything else fail and fusion is inevitable, the fixator can be fashioned into a compressive device.