

Long-term outcomes unilateral transtibial amputations

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Abstract

Background: the long-term outcomes of wartime transtibial amputations have not been well documented. The purpose of this case series is to present the long-term functional, social, and psychological outcomes of modern-day military unilateral transtibial amputees. Patients and Methods: the Iranian Veterans Administration of the Khorasan province invited their Iranian military amputees from the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) to its medical center for evaluation. The patients filled out a detailed questionnaire and were interviewed and examined by each team member. Results: two hundred (97%) of the 210 invited amputees were willing and able to come back for follow-up. Ninety-six of these patients (45%) were unilateral transtibial amputation. The average follow-up was 17.4 years (range 10-22 years). Land mines were the leading cause of war injury necessitating a transtibial amputation (14%). The most common symptoms about their amputated limbs were phantom sensations (64%), phantom pain (17%), and stump pain (42%). Lower back pain, contralateral (nonamputated limb) knee pain, and ipsilateral (amputated limb) knee pain were reported by 44%, 38%, and 13% of subjects, respectively. Sixty-five percent of patients were employed or had been employed for multiple years after their war injury. All patients were married, and 97% had children. Fifty-four percent of amputees reported psychological problems: 26% were currently utilizing psychological support services. Conclusions: at long-term follow-up, most military transtibial amputees experienced phantom sensation or some type of stump pain. More than half had persistent psychiatric problems, but only about half of these patients were receiving psychological treatment. Although this case series reports the status of these amputees, the next step would be to prospectively follow modern wartime amputees using standardized, validated outcome measures. With the goal of optimizing long-term amputee outcomes, researchers should correlate outcomes with demographics, injury characteristics, and treatments to identify and modify factors affecting the amputees' prognosis.

Reaxys Database Information

Indexed Keywords

EMTREE medical terms: adaptation; adaptive behavior; adolescent; adult; agnosia; amputation; article; human; injury; Iran; Iraq; leg injury; male; mental stress; middle aged; pain; prospective study; psychological aspect; questionnaire; soldier; statistics; tibia; time; treatment outcome; war

MeSH: Adaptation, Physiological; Adaptation, Psychological; Adolescent; Adult; Amputation; Humans; Iran; Iraq; Leg Injuries; Male; Middle Aged; Military Personnel; Pain; Phantom Limb; Prospective Studies; Questionnaires; Stress, Psychological; Tibia; Time Factors; Treatment Outcome; War; Young Adult

Medline is the source for the MeSH terms of this document.

ISSN: 0026-4070 CODEN: MMEDASource Type: Journal Original language: English

PubMed ID: 19080771 Document Type: Article