

Frequency of primary and incidence of recurrent Dupuytren's disease significantly impacts on the cost to the health service

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Introduction

Dupuytren's Disease (DD) is a disease of the palmar fascia with unknown aetiology. Surgical resection of diseased tissue is the primary mode of treatment. Unfortunately DD is recurrent following surgical management which can be debilitating for the patient. There have been many attempts to conduct epidemiological studies to calculate the incidence or prevalence of DD. We aim to conduct an epidemiological study to calculate the prevalence of DD operative activity in five major Hand units in the North West of England.

Methods

Surgical codes for DD operations were identified including operative procedures for revision or recurrent cases between April 2001 and March 2003. The average cost of a DD procedure is estimated at £2,200. The total number of primary procedures and revision procedures was calculated in a 24 month period. Cost during this period was also calculated.

Results

A total of 494 primary DD operations were conducted and 148 (30%) revision procedures, equating to an estimated cost of £1,412,400 in 2 years for 5 trusts or £282,480 for an individual trust.

Conclusion

It is evident from this study that DD bears a significant financial burden on the health service. It is crucial to perform primary DD surgery at the correct time and to also carry out the most beneficial procedure to minimise recurrence. Guidelines are suggested to improve the exact timing and type of surgical management in order to optimise patient treatment and operative cost.