

2nd International Conference on

Central Nervous System Disorders & Therapeutics

December 05-07, 2016 Dubai, UAE

Spinal cord infarction after cervical transforaminal epidural steroid injection: Case report and literature review

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Transforaminal epidural steroid injection (TFESI) is a widely-used nonsurgical procedure in the treatment of patients with radicular pain syndrome. The procedure is efficacious in relieving the pain, but a number of minor and major complications have been reported in the medical literature. Increasing frequency of major complications, such as spinal cord infarction and cerebral infarction, has been more recently reported. We report a case of 49-year-old man with a history of chronic cervical radiculopathy, who experienced a devastating complication after TFESI. After 2 minutes of regular TFESI, the patient abruptly experienced muscle weakness in both upper extremities. Within 5 minutes after the start of the procedure, the patient became quadriplegic. Despite active rehabilitation, the patient remained bed-ridden 4 years after the catastrophic event. To our knowledge, this is the first reported case of spinal cord infarction occurring after TFESI in Korea. Considering the risk of dreadful complications, which appears in an unpredictable manner, the benefits of performing TFESI in radiculopathy patients need to be reappraised.

Biography

Hyung Min Kwon is currently working at the Department of the Neurology at SMG-SNU Boramae Medical Center at South Korea. Dr. Kwon has published several original research papers in the reputed journals and participated in the several meetings.

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