

Causes and incidence of 30 day hospital re-admissions after primary TKJR

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Objective: 30 day re-admission of patients following TKJR is estimated between 0.9-9.9%. It's a cause of significant cost to the healthcare system and marks significant patient morbidity.

Aim: The aim of this study is to describe the causes and incidence of patient re-admission to hospital within 30 days of a primary total knee joint replacement between 2009-2015 in a single centre.

Methods: In a retrospective cohort study, computerized records were used to evaluate the causes and incidence of patient re-admission within 30 days of discharge following primary TKJR.

Results: The total 30 day Re-admission rate was 5.0%. Medical causes for re-admission accounted for 29% of re-admissions. 34% were attributed to non-specific pain/swelling. Infection was attributed to 26%. 29% of patients presented with wound problems, either infective or non-infective. The total incidence of re-operation at 30 days was 0.77%.

Conclusions: Our rate of re-admission is consistent with previous studies in the literature. Many patients were found to have no specific cause for re-admission. This suggests it may be possible to further reduce re-admission rates with improved patient education and management of common post-operative symptoms such as pain and swelling. Infection remains a common complication; fortunately the majority superficial infections are successfully treated with antibiotics and few requiring a washout operation. Medical complications account for almost a third showing the importance of good management of patient medical co-morbidities and risk factors.

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