
Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Regarding the paper by Stutesman *et al.* (Post-surgical Ischaemic Myelopathy, *Paraplegia* 1987 25:23–26), my paper on post-traumatic acute anterior spinal cord syndrome (Foo *et al.*, 1981) was quoted as a reference in that paper. I would like to point out that although the anterior spinal cord syndrome can occur after a minor trauma secondary to involvement of the anterior spinal artery, this is rare (Foo *et al.*, 1982). It is more frequently the result of acute compression of the anterior spinal cord by a dislocated bone fragment or a herniated disc, or actual destruction of the anterior part of the spinal cord (Schneider, 1955); available autopsy evidence (Abercrombie, 1843; Bohlman, 1979; Foo *et al.*, 1982; Pertuiset, 1959) has demonstrated in these patients damage to the anterior part of the spinal cord without involvement of the anterior spinal artery.

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References

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- BOHLMAN HH 1979 Acute fractures and dislocations of the cervical spine. *Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery (American)* 61:1119–1142.
- FOO D, BIGNAMI A, ROSSIER AB 1982 Posttraumatic anterior spinal cord syndrome: pathological studies of two patients. *Surgical Neurology* 17:370–375.
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- PERTUISET B 1959 Traumatismes fermés du rachis cervical. Le problème médullaire immédiat. *Annales de Chirurgie* 13:917–923.
- SCHNEIDER RC 1955 The syndrome of acute anterior spinal cord injury. *Journal of Neurosurgery* 12:95–122.
- STUTESMAN JL, HOUSTON JM, WAYNE DA 1987 Post-surgical ischaemic myelopathy. *Paraplegia* 25:23–26.

Reply from Dr Stutesman

In response to Dr Foo's comment that although an anterior spinal cord syndrome can occur after minor trauma secondary to involvement of the anterior spinal cord injury that this is rare. We would certainly agree with Dr Foo that this is a rare phenomenon after minor trauma. His paper (Post Acute Traumatic Anterior Spinal Cord Syndrome, *Paraplegia* 19:201–205) was cited merely as a previous example in the literature of ischaemic injury to the spinal cord. Since the patients cited in our paper all had major trauma, and further, since we came to believe that there was ischaemic injury in areas other than in the distribution of the anterior spinal artery, possibly at the lumbo-sacral plexus, I am not sure I understand the relevance of Dr Foo's comment; however, I certainly do not disagree with his statements.