

CASE REPORT

AVULSION FRACTURE OF THE MEDIAL EPICONDYLE OF THE ELBOW IN A YOUNG JAVELIN THROWER

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CASE REPORT

A 14 year old boy developed pain in his right elbow after throwing the javelin. He was inexperienced and threw the javelin side arm. His main complaint was pain and limitation of movement. He was referred to the Casualty Department where an X-Ray was taken which showed an avulsion fracture of part of the medial epicondyle (Fig. 1). He was then seen in the routine fracture clinic two days later where the elbow was seen to be stiff and he was told to rest it in a sling. Two weeks later the pain had subsided and the patient was discharged with a full range of movement.

DISCUSSION

This is an unusual injury in javelin throwers. The more usual injury in young boys, where the epiphysis of the medial epicondyle has not yet fused, would be avulsion of the whole epicondyle.

Tucker quotes Miller stating that Javelin Elbow is more common than generally supposed. He describes two methods of throwing the javelin, (1) round arm, which causes strain on the medial collateral ligament and (2) overarm, which leads to roughening and new bone formation of the tip of the olecranon or even avulsion of the tip. Miller 1960 states this condition is often common in the enthusiastic but unskilled performer and states the radiograph is usually normal but notes that spurs or calcification can occur on the medial side of the joint and irregularities on the tip of the olecranon or even fracture are seen.

The round arm method of throwing is more common in the unskilled and puts strain on the medial ligament, which must have been the method of injury in this case.

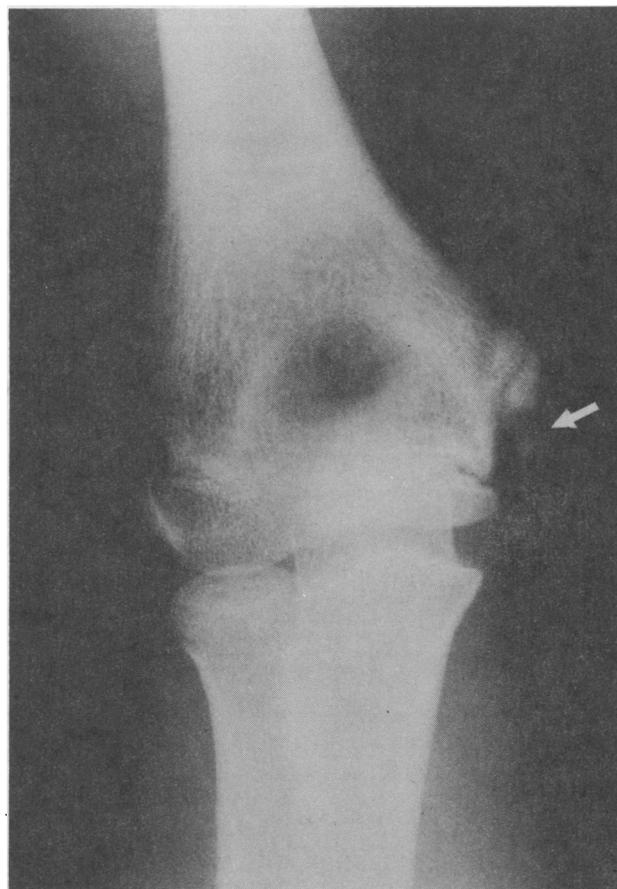


Fig. 1: Avulsion fracture of the medial epicondyle and humerus.

REFERENCES

- Miller, J. E. 1960 "Javelin thrower's elbow", *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, 4: 788.
- Tucker, W. E. and Armstrong, J. R. "Injuries in sport", Staples Press: 381.