

Operative treatment of distal radius fractures is increasing – Results from a nationwide Swedish registry study

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Conclusion

In Sweden, there is an increasing tendency to treat distal radius fractures surgically. The previously reported increase in the use of plating was confirmed, with a threefold increase over a 5-year period. The use of external fixation has decreased correspondingly.

Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the epidemiology of distal radius fractures in the Swedish population. A secondary aim was to present the treatment methods used for distal radius fractures during the years 2005–2010.

Materials and Methods

The study population consists of all patients in Sweden diagnosed with a distal radius fracture (S52.50/51, S52.60/61) during the period 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2010.

Results

There was a total number of 177 893 distal radius fractures in the study population during the study period. The incidence in the total population was 32/10 000 personyears and did not change during the period investigated. Age specific incidence is presented in figure 1. The mean age was 44 years (range 0–104). The proportion of surgically treated fractures increased from 16% in 2005 to 20% in 2010 (figure 2).

The incidence of plate fixation in the total population increased by 257% whereas the incidence of external fixation diminished by 66% (figure 3). The change was most pronounced in the age group 50–74 years.

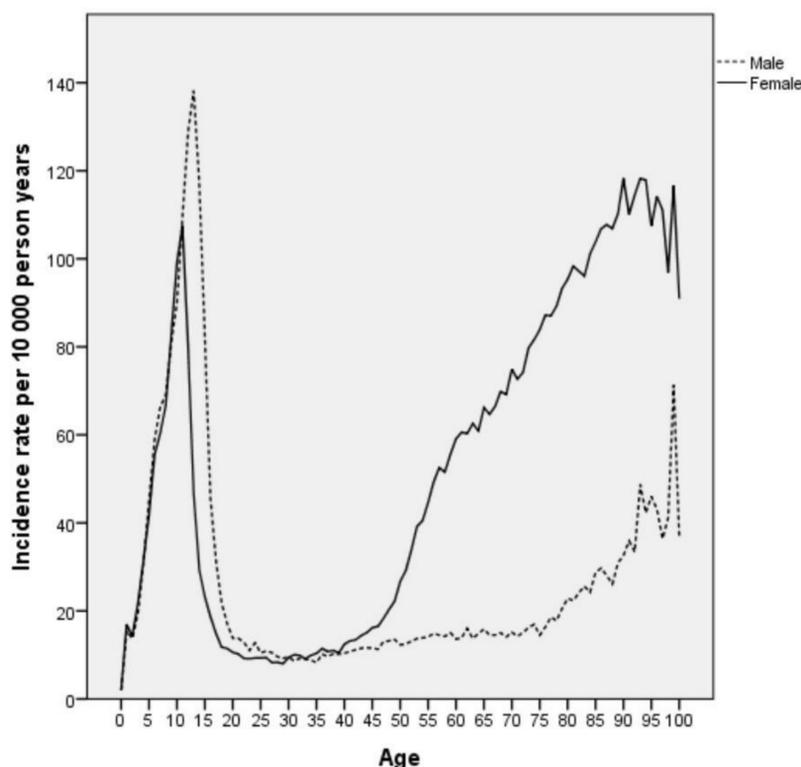


Figure 1: The incidence of all distal radius fractures in Sweden during 2005 – 2010 related to age and gender.

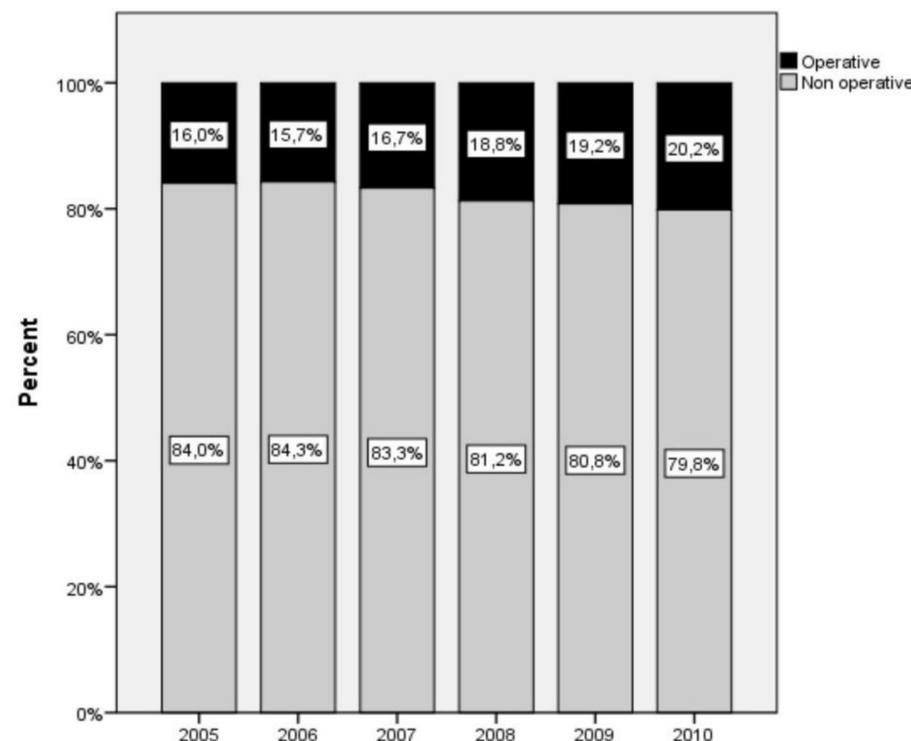


Figure 2: The proportion of operative versus non-operative treatment of distal radius fractures in Sweden during 2005 – 2010.

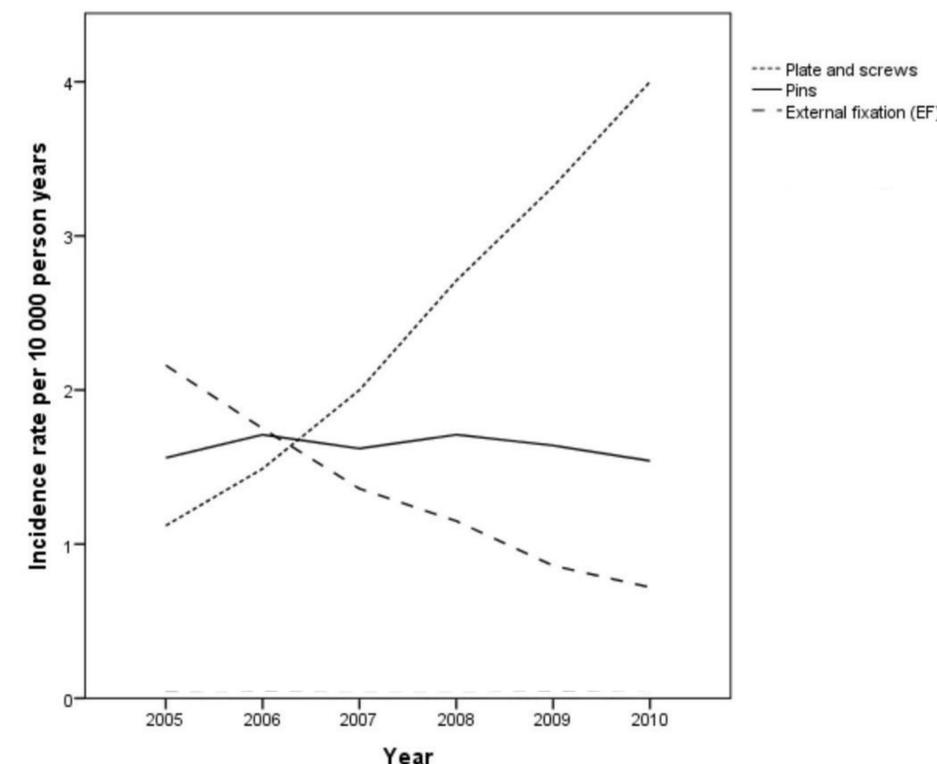


Figure 3: Incidence of surgical techniques for distal radius fractures in Sweden 2005 – 2010.

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