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Surgical Implications of “Charcot Foot” in Patients with Diabetes Mellitus

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The “Charcot foot” is a degenerative musculoskeletal disease which occurs in patients with diabetes mellitus due to peripheral neuropathy. It may lead to severe complications and sometimes to major amputations of the limb.

It is briefly shown such a patient, with bilateral amputation because of 6 months serious evolution in absence of a proper care.

Then we analyze a lot of 20 patients who were admitted in “Dr. I. Cantacuzino“ hospital between 2003 and 2004 with “Charcot foot” diagnostic. They represent 1.55% of surgical interventions that were made for the diabetic foot problems.

The surgical treatment is addressed only to the septic or mechanical complications. We performed the drainage of the suppurations in 8 cases, distal amputations (3 cases), skin graft at 3 patients, transmetatarsal amputation in one case or below knee amputations in 2 cases.

The orthopedic (operative or nonoperative) treatment is the basic part of the management.

Immediate immobilization with non-weight bearing, the right using of custom orthotics and molded shoes are the most important parts of the nonoperative treatment and can prevent the severe complications.