

Is The Age of 40 a Real Limit for ACL Reconstruction In Football Players?

Leonardo Osti, MD, ITALY

Hesperia Hospital
Modena, ITALY

Summary:

This retrospective study evaluated the functional outcomes of arthroscopic ACL reconstruction in soccer player over 40 years old compared with a control group under 30 years old.

Abstract:

Purpose:

To compare the outcomes of arthroscopic Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) reconstruction procedure in 20 football players over 40 and 20 subjects younger than 30 years (control group) at a minimum post-operative follow-up of 24 months.

Material and Methods:

The two groups consisted of 20 patients all males age ranged from 16-29 (mean age 26.1) for the first group and 20 patients in the second group ranged from 40 to 54 (mean age 46.7). All the patients underwent arthroscopic ACL reconstruction performed using a single bundle hamstring graft. A standardized post-op operative regime was administered in both groups. Pre- and post-operative anterior-posterior laxity was assessed by Lachman test, pivot shift test and KT1000 arthrometer at manual maximum stress.

Clinical functional evaluation was assessed according to IKDC Committee subjective knee form, IKDC ligament standard evaluation and Lysholm score.

Results:

At 2 years, all variables significantly improved in both groups compared to pre-operative values ($P < 0.05$), with non-significant intergroup difference. IKDC AB values were 92% in the two groups Lysholm score mean values were 91 vs 90 in the under 40 and over 40 groups return to play mean time was 5.8 months vs 5.9 months

Conclusions:

In the present study, arthroscopic surgery for the management of ACL tear and secondary lesions provides comparable clinical outcomes in football players over 40 and in patients aged below 30 years. Age over 40 years is not a limit for ACL reconstruction in football players.