



Enhanced tmj arthrocentesis for disc displacement without reduction: efficacy of vacuum-assisted technique versus conventional approach

Eduardo Grossmann¹, Rodrigo Lorenzi Poluha²

¹Federal University of Rio Grande Do Sul, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil,

²Department of Dentistry, State University of Maringá, Maringá, Parana, Brazil

Introduction

Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders, such as disc displacement without reduction (DDWOR), pose significant clinical challenges due to the associated pain and functional limitations. Arthrocentesis is a minimally invasive technique employed to manage these conditions. This study aims to compare the effectiveness of two different techniques of double puncture arthrocentesis—with and without the addition of catheters and a vacuum pump—in managing TMJ DDWOR.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate and compare the clinical outcomes of TMJ arthrocentesis performed with the addition of catheters and a vacuum pump versus without any additional devices. This comparison aims to identify the technique that provides superior symptomatic relief and functional improvement.

Methods

A total of 48 patients diagnosed with DDWOR were randomly and blindly allocated into two treatment groups (N = 24 each). Group 1 underwent TMJ arthrocentesis with the addition of catheters and a vacuum pump to the second needle, while Group 2 received TMJ arthrocentesis without any additional devices. The variables recorded and compared between the groups included: patient's pain perception (measured using the visual analogue scale [VAS; 0–10]), maximal interincisal distance (MID; measured in millimeters), joint effusion (JE; noted as presence or absence), facial edema (FE; noted as presence or absence), and operation duration (OP; recorded in minutes).

Results

Patients in Group 1, who received TMJ arthrocentesis with the addition of catheters and a vacuum pump, presented significantly lower VAS scores ($p < 0.001$) and a reduced presence of FE ($p = 0.03$) in the postoperative period. Furthermore, these patients demonstrated an increase in MID values ($p = 0.026$) and a reduction in JE ($p = 0.022$) after 3 months. Additionally, the procedure in Group 1 was performed significantly faster ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion

The results indicate that performing arthrocentesis with the addition of a vacuum pump enhances the efficiency of the procedure, yielding better outcomes in terms of pain reduction, facial swelling mitigation, improved mouth opening, and decreased joint effusion. This technique, therefore, offers a superior approach for managing TMJ DDWOR, improving both immediate and long-term patient outcomes.