

Evaluating Low Back Pain Patients for Prolapsed Intervertebral Disc in a Kenyan Teaching Hospital

Abstract:

Background Accurate evaluation of low back pain is essential for its rational management. The extent of use of clinical and imaging findings in identification of prolapsed intervertebral disk varies between centers. In Kenya, the diagnostic procedure is obscure. Objective To assess the evaluation of low back pain patients for prolapsed intervertebral disk at Kenyatta National Hospital, a teaching and referral hospital in Kenya. Study Design A retrospective chart study Patients and Methods Historical, physical and imaging findings of patients who presented with low back pain and subsequently diagnosed with prolapsed inter-vertebral disk between Jan 1997 and December 2007 were evaluated. Results Of the six hundred and three patients (267 males, 336 females) who were evaluated, risk factors were recorded in 39.5% patients, 35.3% patients had sciatica while straight leg raising test was performed in 52.2% patients. Investigations performed in these patients included plain roentograms (38.5%), CT scan (9.1%) and MRI (44.1%). Conclusion The evaluation of low back pain for prolapsed inter-vertebral disk was incomplete. History of sciatica, SLRT, crossed SLRT and MRI use are recommended for routine evaluation of low back pain for PID.