

Hip Strength in Elderly Hip Fractures: Intertrochanteric Versus Femoral Neck Fracture Patients - A Retrospective Study

Napol Ratanasernsub¹, Saran Tantavisut, Chavarin Amarase, Pathit Sirichuchnin
¹Department of Orthopaedic, Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

INTRODUCTION: This study compares postoperative hip flexor and abductor muscle strength, as well as clinical outcomes, between elderly patients with femoral neck fractures and those with intertrochanteric fractures.

METHODS: We conducted a retrospective cohort study at a Level-1 trauma center involving patients aged ≥60 years who underwent surgery (hip internal fixation or hip replacement) for femoral neck or intertrochanteric fractures. Primary outcomes were postoperative hip flexion and abduction strength, with strength deficits calculated by subtracting the strength of the injured side from the normal side. Secondary outcomes included the Harris Hip Score (HHS), Barthel Index (BI) for activities of daily living, de Morton Mobility Index (DEMMI), Functional Reach Test (FRT), 5-time Sit-to-Stand Test (5TSTS), and Timed Up and Go Test (TUG). All outcomes were analyzed at 3 months of follow-up or later.

RESULTS: The study included 128 patients (61 with femoral neck fractures and 67 with intertrochanteric fractures) with a mean follow-up of 21 months, showing minimal baseline differences. The femoral neck fracture group demonstrated a trend towards superior mean hip flexion strength on the injured side, with an average of 6.269 kg compared to 5.612 kg in the intertrochanteric fracture group (p=0.054). The mean hip flexion strength deficit was 0.725 kg (9.935%) on the injured side for femoral neck fractures, compared to 1.292 kg (16.092%) for intertrochanteric fractures (p<0.05). No significant differences were found in mean hip abduction strength or abduction strength deficit on the injured side between fracture types. Clinical outcomes significantly favored femoral neck fractures in terms of HHS, DEMMI, FRT, 5TSTS, and TUG scores (p<0.05). No difference in BI scores was observed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: The intertrochanteric fracture group shows a profound loss in flexion strength, possibly due to lesser trochanter involvement compared to femoral neck fractures. However, hip abduction strength is similar in the two fracture types. Greater trochanter fractures and gluteus medius injury during nailing affect the intertrochanteric group, while surgical damage, particularly in posterior-approach hip arthroplasty in our study, may contribute to abductor weakness in femoral neck fractures. Femoral neck fractures exhibited better hip flexion strength and clinical outcomes, highlighting the need for tailored rehabilitation, postoperative care, and fall prevention. Special consideration should be given to intertrochanteric fracture patients to optimize recovery and functionality.



FIGURE 2. (a) The goniometer for hip strength on the injured side, and (b) the goniometer for hip strength on the normal side.

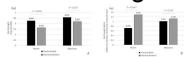


FIGURE 2. (a) The goniometer for hip strength on the injured side, and (b) the goniometer for hip strength on the normal side.

Table 1. Demographic and Clinical Characteristics of Patients (n = 128)									
Fracture Type		Age (years)		Gender		Side		Surgery	
		Mean (SD)		n (%)		n (%)		n (%)	
Femoral Neck		72.5 (10.5)		35 (57.5)		26 (42.5)		51 (84)	
Intertrochanteric		71.5 (10.5)		32 (47.9)		35 (52.1)		67 (100)	
Total		72.0 (10.5)		67 (52.7)		61 (47.3)		118 (92)	

Table 2. Postoperative Hip Flexion and Abduction Strength (n = 128)									
Fracture Type		Mean (SD)		p-value		Mean (SD)		p-value	
Femoral Neck		6.269 (1.054)		0.054		5.612 (1.054)		0.054	
Intertrochanteric		5.612 (1.054)		0.054		5.612 (1.054)		0.054	
Total		5.940 (1.054)		0.054		5.612 (1.054)		0.054	

Table 3. Functional Outcomes (n = 128)									
Fracture Type		Mean (SD)		p-value		Mean (SD)		p-value	
Femoral Neck		84.5 (10.5)		0.054		78.5 (10.5)		0.054	
Intertrochanteric		78.5 (10.5)		0.054		78.5 (10.5)		0.054	
Total		81.5 (10.5)		0.054		78.5 (10.5)		0.054	

Table 4. Patient Satisfaction (n = 128)									
Fracture Type		Mean (SD)		p-value		Mean (SD)		p-value	
Femoral Neck		84.5 (10.5)		0.054		78.5 (10.5)		0.054	
Intertrochanteric		78.5 (10.5)		0.054		78.5 (10.5)		0.054	
Total		81.5 (10.5)		0.054		78.5 (10.5)		0.054	