

28th Annual Meeting of the European Musculo-Skeletal Oncology Society 16th EMSOS Nurse and Allied Professions Group Meeting

April 29th - May Ist 2015 Athens, Greece



PP-047

Early clinical outcomes for juxta-articular distal humeral tumors treated with hemiarthroplasty concept

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The concept of elbow hemiarthroplasty, for the treatment of Juxta-articular tumours of the distal humerus, has not been popularized among surgical oncologists. While treatment with total elbow arthroplasty has been well described in the literature, very little has been published about hemi-arthroplasty modality for such group of patients.

We report the clinical and functional outcomes of two cases treated with this surgical technique. We used a custom-made distal humeral endoprothesis in a 26 and 35 year-old patients. The indications were chondrosarcoma and unknown tumour that was treated elsewhere with resection, fibular grafting and fixation. Satisfactory functional outcome with mean Toronto extremity salvage score of 83% of normal. Radiological appearances were satisfactory. No complications were reported.

This report warrants further long term evaluation of this technique and with a larger number of cases. The authors believe that custom-made endoprosthetic reconstruction of the distal humerus for bone tumours is a viable treatment method in carefully selected patients.