

## Outcome Analysis of Cervical Myelopathy in Patients More Than 70 Years of Age

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### – Abstract –

**Study Design :** A retrospective study.

**Objectives :** To evaluate the surgical outcomes and image by mid-sagittal MRI in patients with cervical myelopathy who were more than 70 years of age.

**Summary of literature Review :** Surgical outcomes of cervical myelopathy in the elderly patients were worse than in the younger patients, but decompression surgery is helpful for improving neurologic function in the elderly.

**Materials and Methods :** Nine patients more than 70 years of age who underwent surgery were reviewed. Neurologic deficits after surgery were assessed using a scoring system proposed by Japanese Orthopaedic Association(JOA ) and clinical results and morphological changes on MRI were compared with those of patients less than 70 years old age.

**Results :** The preoperative mean JOA score was 8.5 and the postoperative mean JOA score 12.8 and the maximum recovery rate was 51.1%, but these were significantly inferior to scores in those less than 70 years of age. At the time of final follow up , the mean JOA score had decreased 11.3 and the recovery rate was 32.6%. All patients except one were improved their daily living function. On the postoperative midline T1 sagittal MRI, morphological improvement was seen in 44% in patients more than 70 years of age, while 69% of patients were improved in the control group.

**Conclusions :** Surgical decompression appears to be necessary as soon as possible after the onset of progressive myelopathy in the elderly patients for improving neurologic function and ability to engage in daily living.

**Key Words :** Cervical spine , Myelopathy , Aged, Decompression surgery

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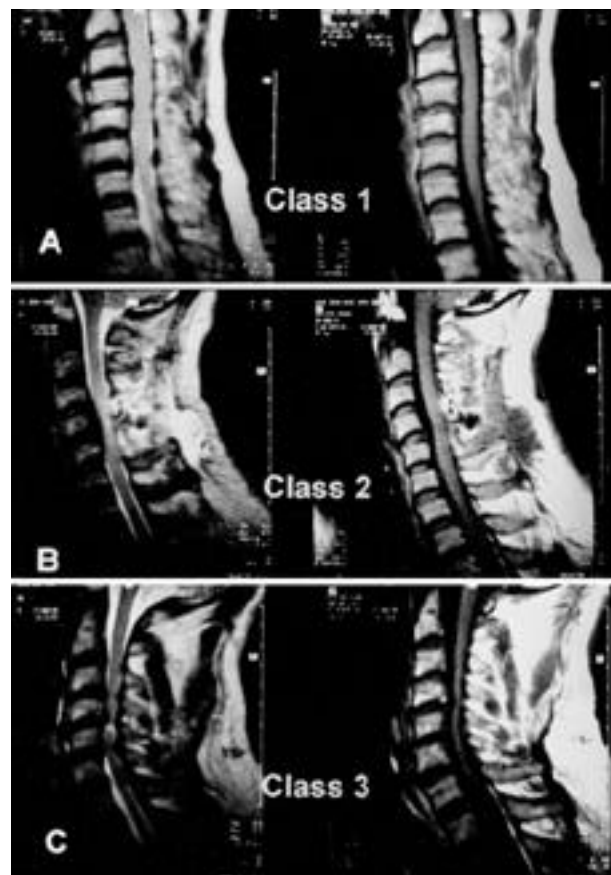
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10.3, 70

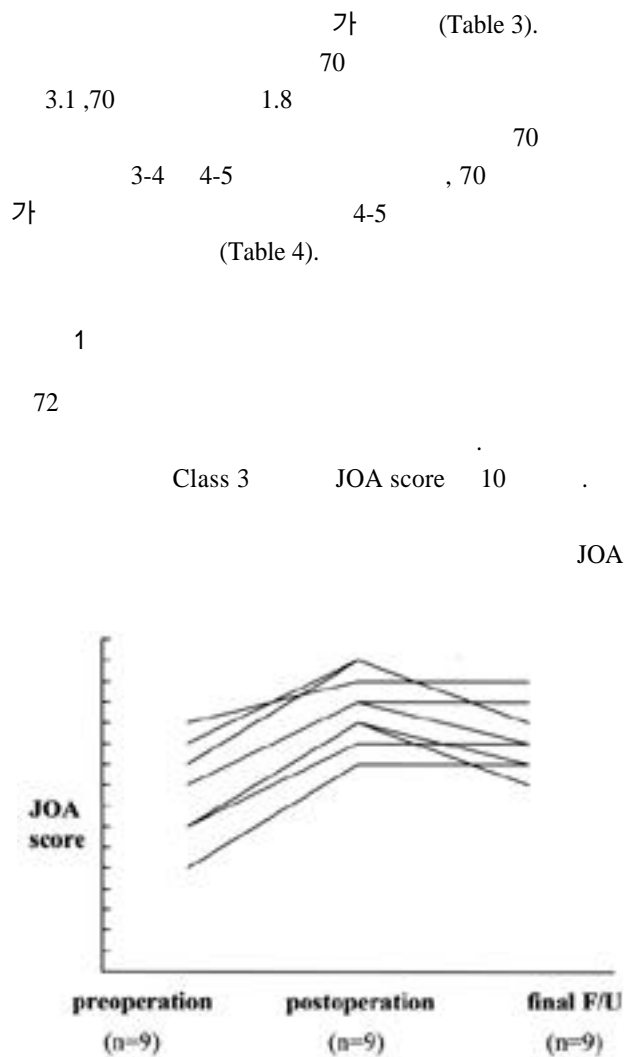


**Fig. 1.** Classification of compressed deformities in the cervical cord on the sagittal MRI.

**Table 1.** JOA scoring system & Recovery rate in Cervical Myelopathy

I Motor dysfunction(upper extremities)	3.1, 70
0 Unable to feed oneself	
1 Unable to handle chopsticks, able to eat with a spoon	3-4 4-5 , 70
2 Handle chopsticks with much difficulty	가
3 Handle chopsticks with slight difficulty	(Table 4).
4 None	
II Motor dysfunction(lower extremities)	
0 Unable to walk	1
1 Walk with walking aid	72
2 Able to go up and/or down stairs with handrail for support	
3 Lack of stability and smooth gait	Class 3 JOA score 10
4 None	
III Sensory deficit	JOA
A Upper extremities	
0 Severe sensory loss or pain	
1 Mild sensory loss	
2 None	
B Lower extremities same as A	
C Trunk same as A	
IV Sphinter dysfunction	
0 Unable to void	
1 Marked difficulty in micturition(retention, stranguary)	
2 Difficulty in micturition(pollakisuria, hesitation)	
3 None	

Recovery rate =  $\frac{\text{postop.score} - \text{preop.score}}{17 - \text{preop.score}} \times 100\%$

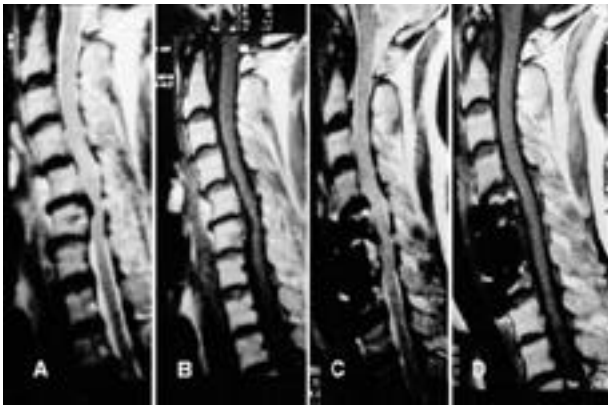
**Fig. 2.** Change in the JOA score.**Table 2.** The clinical results in aged and control group

	control group	70 years older patients	P value
Disease duration (month)	24(6 - 52)	45(12 - 132)	-
JOA score			
preoperation	10.3	8.5	NS
postoperation	14.5	12.8	<0.01
final F/U	13.2	11.3	<0.01
Recovery rate(%)			
postoperation	62.6	51.1	<0.01
final F/U	52.3	32.6	<0.01
Four degrees evaluation			
excellent	3	0	
good	7	6	-
fair	3	3	
unchanged	0	0	

NS = not significant

**Table 3.** Pre- & Post-operative MRI findings

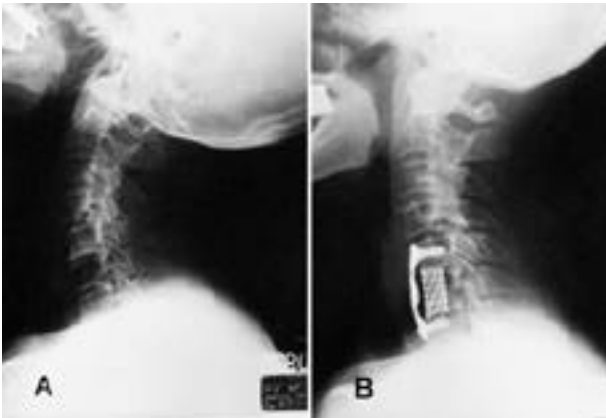
	control group	70 years older patients
Preoperative MRI		
Class 0	0	0
Class 1	1(8%)	0
Class 2	5(38%)	2(22%)
Class 3	7(54%)	7(78%)
Postoperative MRI		
Class 0	2(16%)	0
Class 1	5(38%)	2(22%)
Class 2	4(30%)	3(33%)
Class 3	2(16%)	4(45%)



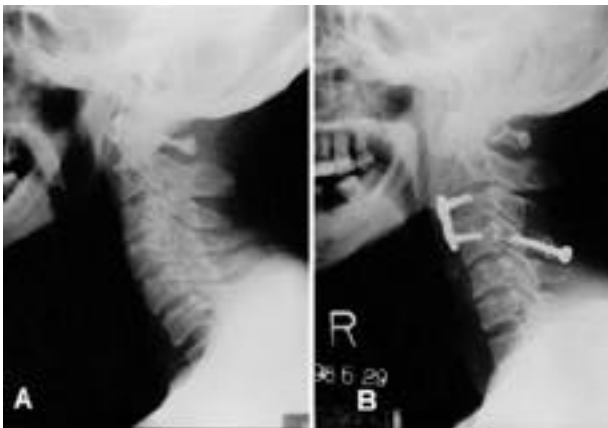
**Fig. 4.** 72-year-old woman. **A, B.** preoperative sagittal MRI. **C, D.** postoperative sagittal MRI

**Table 4.** The level of cord compression

Level	control	70 years older patients
C2/3	0	2(22%)
C3/4	3(23%)	7(78%)
C4/5	10(77%)	9(100%)
C5/6	9(69%)	6(67%)
C6/7	2(15%)	4(44%)



**Fig. 3.** 72-year-old woman. **A.** preoperative lateral radiograph. **B.** postoperative lateral radiograph.



**Fig. 5.** 71-year-old man. **A.** preoperative lateral radiograph. **B.** postoperative lateral radiograph.

score 15, 71% (Fig. 3, 4).

2

71 ,

Class 3 T2-sagittal image

42% (Fig. 5, 6).

3

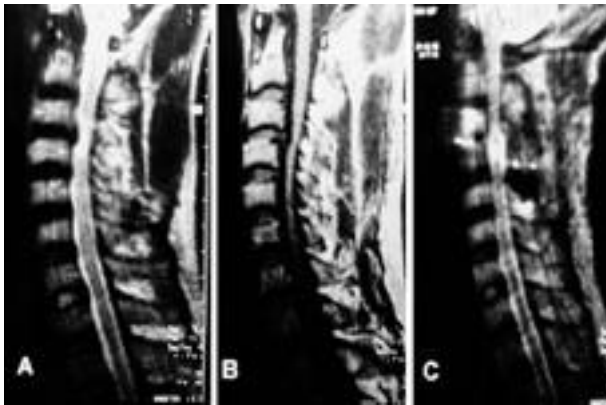
73 ,

Class 3 JOA score 9 .

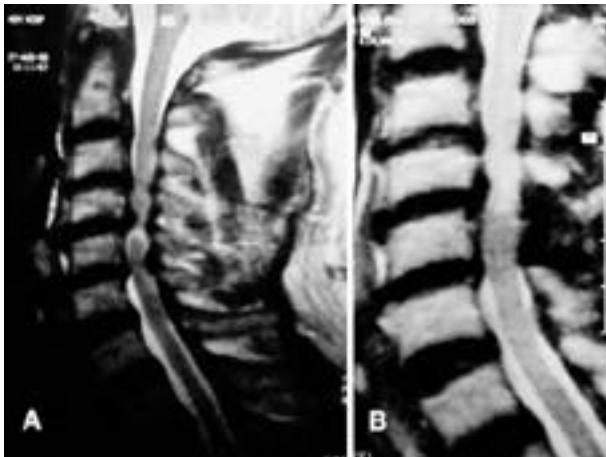
50% (Fig. 7).

<sup>1,4), Takada<sup>9)</sup></sup> 29

5.7 28%가 , 24%가 ,



**Fig. 6.** 71-year-old man. **A.** preoperative sagittal T2-weighted MRI showed high signal area. **C.** postoperative sagittal T2-weighted MRI showed no signal change.



**Fig. 7.** 73-year-old man. **A.** preoperative sagittal MRI. **B.** post-operative sagittal MRI.

48% 가  
5)  
70  
3-4 (78%) 4-5 (100%)  
3.1  
2.7)

가 44% 69%

JOA score  
(anterior horn cells) (cor-  
ticospinal tract) (posterior funiculus)  
(myelinated fiber)  
Kawamura 3) 가  
( -motoneuron) ( -  
motoneuron) 가

가 , 8  
가 가 6  
가 .

13),  
Nagata 8)  
65 52% 70  
51.1%  
가

70 가 70  
가  
가

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1) Bernhardt M, Hynes RA, Blume HW and White AA  
III : Current concept review: Cervical spondylotic myelo-

- : 70  
 : 70  
 : 1988 1997 70 9 ,  
 Japanese Orthopedic Association(JOA) score 가  
 70  
 : JOA score 8.5 12.8 51.1% 70  
 JOA score 11.3 32.6% 1  
 70  
 44% 70 69%  
 :  
 :