

Posterior Lumbar Interbody Fusion in the Pyogenic Discitis

Weon-Wook Park, M.D., Yang-Soo Park, M.D., Sang-Jin Cheon, M.D., Ju-Young Jung, M.D.

Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, College of Medicine, Pusan National University, Pusan, Korea

– Abstract –

Study design : To present preliminary results of PLIF (Posterior lumbar interbody fusion) and pedicle screw fixation in the lumbar pyogenic discitis.

Objectives : To evaluate the advantages and effects of PLIF and posterior instrumentation over recurrence of infection in lumbar pyogenic discitis which are resistant to antibiotics.

Summary of Literature Review : To the date, anterior removal of the focus followed by interposing autogenous bone graft without additional instrumentation and postoperative long-term immobilization has been the standard operative procedure.

Materials and Methods : 10 consecutive patients who had lumbar pyogenic discitis were treated by posterior approach from October 1997 to March 1999.

Results : Based on MRI or CT finding, 9 solid union at 3~4 months after operation and 1 suspicious union at 1 year after operation were observed. The mean preoperative lordotic angle of the affected segments was 9°, compared to 20° after postoperation and 17° at last follow up. As for functional result of Kirkaldy-Willis, outcome was excellent in 3, good in 5, fair in 2, none poor case. The duration of postoperative bed rest period was an average of 3 days.

Conclusions : PLIF with instrumentation in lumbar pyogenic discitis is a useful treatment in posterior epidural abscess, coexistent spinal stenosis and lower lumbar level where anterior fixation is impossible. It is especially indicated in the case of scanty antevertebral abscess with minimal bone destruction. Its main advantage is early ambulation.

Key Words : Lumbar spine, Discitis, Posterior lumbar interbody fusion

Address reprint requests to

Weon-Wook Park, M.D.

Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, College of Medicine, Pusan National University

#1-10, Ami-dong, Seo-gu, Pusan, 602-739, Korea

Tel : 82-51-240-7246, Fax : 82-51-243-7273, E-mail : parkww@hyowon.pusan.ac.kr

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Kirkaldy-Willis

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Table 1. Summarized data of 10 patients with pyogenic lumbar discitis

Number	Age/Sex	Level	Epidural abscess	Spinal disorder	Surgical procedure	Screw fixation	Culture	Functional results	Complication
1	F/77	L3-L4	None	L3-L5 stenosis	L3-L5 Lam* with cancellous PLIF†	L2, L3, L4, L5	Chryseomonas luteola	Excellent	None
2	M/53	L5-S1	Ventral	L4-5 HNP†	L5-S1 Lam with strut PLIF	L5, S1	No growth	Good	Superficial wound infection
3	F/47	L5-S1	Dorsal	L5-S1 post surgical stenosis	L5-S1 Lam with strut PLIF	L4, S1	No growth	Good	None
4	F/70	L4-L5	Ventral	L4-L5 stenosis	L4-L5 Lam with strut PLIF	L4, L5, S1	No growth	Excellent	Esophageal candidiasis
5	F/51	L4-L5	Ventral	None	L4-L5 Lam with strut PLIF	L4, S1	No growth	Good	Nerve root irritation
6	F/69	L4-L5	None	L4-L5 stenosis	L4-L5 Lam with strut PLIF	L4, L5	Burkholderia cepacia	Excellent	None
7	M/57	L3-L4	Ventral	L3-L4 post surgical stenosis	L3-L4 Lam with strut PLIF	L3, L4	Staphylococcus aureus	Fair	None
8	M/60	L4-L5	Dorsal	L3-L5 stenosis with strut PLIF	L3-L5 Lam with strut PLIF	L3, L4, S1	Fair	None	
9	F/65	L5-S1	Ventral	None	Staphylococcus aureus	L5, S1	No growth	Good	Nerve root irritation
10	F/51	L4-L5	Ventral	L3-L5 stenosis	L3-L5 Lam with strut PLIF	L2, L3, L4, L5	No growth	Good	None

*, Laminectomy; †, Posterior lumbar interbody fusion; ‡, Herniation of nucleus pulposus.

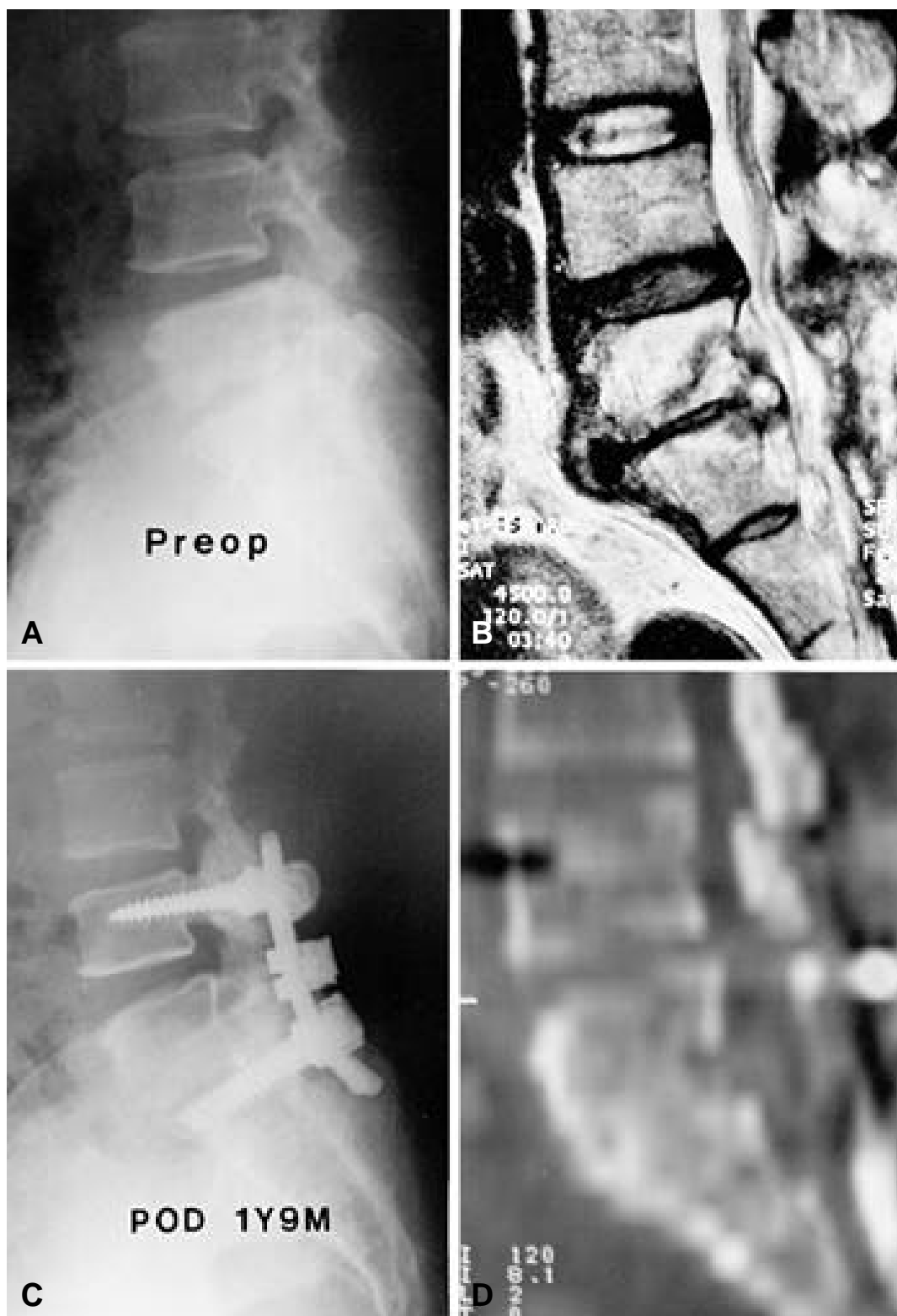


Fig. 1-A. Lateral radiographs shows L5-S1 disc space narrowing and irregular end plates.
B. T2-weighted image reveal a high intensity epidural abscess and destruction of the end plate. Also note the increased signal intensity in the involved surrounding vertebral bodies.
C. Follow-up lateral radiography, made 1 year 9 months after the operation, reveal solid fusion.
D. The CT scan demonstrates fusion between L5 and S1.

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Fredrickson ⁶⁾

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37.8mm/hr(20~82),

5.425mg/dl(0.56~11.32)

10mm/hr, 0.5mg/dl

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Kirkaldy-Willis 3

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