Pseudoaneurysms of the popliteal and tibioperoneal arteries after gunshot injuries.

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BACKGROUND: Pseudoaneurysms (PsAns) of the popliteal and tibioperoneal arteries are very rare and occur as a late complication after arterial injury. This study was undertaken to describe the management of PsAns of the popliteal and tibioperoneal arteries after gunshot injuries in a civilian vascular surgical unit with a large trauma workload.

METHODS: A retrospective review of the records of nine patients treated between January 1998 and November 2001 at the Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery Department of Numune Education and Research Hospital was undertaken.

RESULTS: Nine PsAns of the popliteal and tibioperoneal arteries after gunshot injuries were treated. The delay in diagnosis from the time of injury ranged from 15 days to 14 months, with a median delay of 75 days. One case with graft occlusion was noticed in a patient with a popliteal artery PsAn. In these cases, the early and late patency rate and limb salvage were 100%.

CONCLUSION: Early diagnosis of popliteal and tibioperoneal PsAns is an important factor in successful surgical reconstruction. The operative procedures will be simple if the interval between injury and operation is short, and surgical treatment for PsAns includes reconstruction of both arterial and venous arteries.

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