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**Article received on:**

15/06/2017

**Accepted for publication:**

15/09/2017

**Received after proof reading:**

03/11/2017

## INTRODUCTION

Ankle fractures are one of the most common fractures that are presented in the casualty. Approximately 10% of all fractures are ankle fractures.<sup>1</sup> It can cause significant morbidity in population.<sup>2</sup> External rotation, twisting force that causes the talus to rotate externally is the usual mechanism of injury.<sup>3</sup> Ankle injury after ankle sprain is the most common injury which also occurs with same trauma. The injury can be managed in a cast or a brace for about 6 weeks. Surgical fixation is required in about 50% of cases.<sup>4</sup> X-rays is the first investigation for diagnosis.<sup>5</sup> X-rays has been classified as a group 1 carcinogen by World Health Organization. If radiation hazards has to be reduce then either the exposure has be minimal or not to do X-rays.<sup>6</sup> Nowadays, most of the doctors prescribe X-rays to patients with foot and ankle injuries; but less than 15% have fractures. The rest of the patients were exposed unnecessary to radiation.<sup>7</sup>

## ANKLE AND MIDFOOT FRACTURES; DIAGNOSTIC ACCURACY OF OTTAWA RULES

**Mohammad Shabir<sup>1</sup>, Shahid Iqbal<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Inam<sup>3</sup>, Arif Shehzad<sup>4</sup>, Ihsanullah<sup>5</sup>**

**ABSTRACT... Objectives:** To determine the diagnostic accuracy of Ottawa rule in ankle and midfoot fracture keeping x-ray as gold standard. **Study Design:** Descriptive study. **Setting:** Department of Orthopedics, Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar. **Period:** June 2014 to May 2016. **Materials and Methods:** Through a Cross Sectional Study Design, a total of 175 patients presenting with suspicion of ankle/mid foot fracture were selected in a consecutive manner from the OPD and subjected to detection of fracture through Ottawa Ankle Rule followed by X-ray to confirm the diagnosis of fracture. **Results:** The mean age group of patients in our study was 36.1+10.4 years. There were 85.7% males and 14.3% were females. The sensitivity analysis shows OAR has a sensitivity of 81.2% and specificity 61.9%, positive predictive value of the OAR is 79.1% and negative predictive value is 65.0% keeping X-ray as a gold standard. **Conclusion:** The overall sensitivity and specificity of the OAR lies within an acceptable range in our local population however, we still recommend further research work over it before recommendations as a routine screening test for the fracture of ankle or mid foot.

**Key words:** Ottawa Ankle Rule, Fracture, Ankle, Foot, X-ray.

**Article Citation:** Shabir M, Iqbal S, Inam M, Shehzad A, Ihsanullah. Ankle and midfoot fractures; Diagnostic accuracy of ottawa rules. Professional Med J 2017;24(11):1680-1684. DOI:10.17957/TPMJ/17.4124

To exclude the need of X-rays in ankle injuries there is an Ottawa Ankle rules.<sup>8</sup> The sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value and negative predictive value of the Ottawa Ankle Rule (OAR) for diagnosis of ankle fractures were 96.8%, 45.8%, 48.4% and 96.5%, respectively.<sup>9</sup> The Ottawa Ankle Rules are clinical decision making questionnaire that is derived and validated by Stiell and his colleagues for diagnosis in acute ankle and midfoot injuries. If we use the Ottawa Rule in the adult population it has to decrease radiation exposure and at the same time will decrease in health care expenditures and wait time.<sup>10,11</sup> The objective of the study is to determine the diagnostic accuracy of Ottawa rule in ankle and midfoot fracture keeping x-ray as gold standard. There is paucity of local data available regarding Ottawa ankle rules and the available statistics are controversial with sensitivities ranging from 74.8% to 96% and specificities ranging from 45% to 68.6%. This study is therefore designed to validate the applicability of the Ottawa Ankle Rule

in our population and to compare the results with available data. Implementation of the rules would result in significant savings in healthcare costs and medical resources without compromising quality of care.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a Cross-sectional validation study that has been conducted in Department of Orthopedic surgery Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar from June 2014 to May 2016 on 175 patients of either sex, aged fifteen to fifty years with presentation within ten days or trauma. Patients with open fracture, unconscious patients, patients with pre-existing musculoskeletal disease, patients with previous history of surgery, revisits for the same injury and late presentation, after 10 days, patients with gross deformity of the ankle or foot, patients with polyneuropathy and patients with multisystem trauma were excluded from the study. All patients presenting to outpatient department or emergency department with history of trauma and pain at ankle joint qualifying the inclusion and exclusion criteria was registered, was thoroughly examined and managed according to the protocol of ATLS. The purpose of the study was explained, written and informed consent was taken from all the patients. On registering the patient data (age, gender, mechanism of injury, and laterality, Annex A) ankle joint and foot was assessed for Ottawa rule and recorded. Prediction of fracture was calculated for each patient according to Ottawa rule and then radiograph of the ankle joint and foot anteroposterior and lateral views was advised. Radiograph was checked for any fracture. All the data was analyzed with the help of SPSS v17. Frequency and percentages were computed for categorical variables like gender, ankle evaluated. Mean and standard deviation was calculated for numeric variables. Sensitivity, specificity, positive and negative predictive value was calculated.

## RESULTS

There were 33.7% patients age upto 30 years, 20% of patients between 31-40 years and 46.3% patients between 41-50 years with mean age of the patients was 36.1±10.4 years (Table-I). According to gender, 85.7% were males and

14.3% were females (Figure-1).

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Upto 30	59	33.7	33.7
31 to 40	35	20.0	53.7
41 to 50	81	46.3	100.0

Table-I. Age-wise distribution of the sample (n=175)

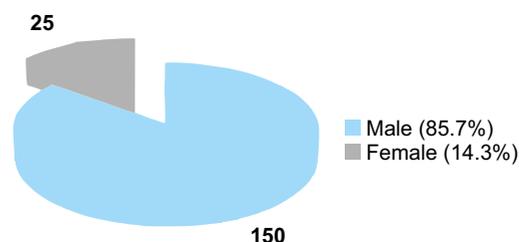


Figure-1. Gender-wise distribution of the sample (n=175)

The Ottawa Ankle Rule (OAR) was used as a screening test for the detection fractures of ankle or mid foot keeping X-ray as a gold standard. On presentation OAR was done on all patients with suspected ankle/mid foot fracture. The results obtained were that out of 175 patients, 64% had positive fracture and 36% had negative results (Table-II).

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Positive	112	64.0	64.0
Negative	63	36.0	100.0
Total	175	100.0	

Table-II. Fracture of ankle / mid foot on oar (n = 175)

Since X-ray was used as gold standard for the confirmation of fracture of ankle/mid foot, all patients after undergoing assessment on OAR underwent X-ray. On X-ray we found that fracture of the ankle/mid foot was seen in 65.7% of cases and negative in 34.3% of cases (Table-III).

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Positive	115	65.7	65.7
Negative	60	34.3	100.0
Total	175	100.0	

Table-III. Fracture of ankle mid foot on x ray (n = 175)

On applying the formulae for calculation, sensitivity of OAR was found to be 81.2% and

specificity 61.9%. The positive predictive value of the OAR is 79.1% and negative predictive value is 65.0% (Table-IV).

		Ankle/foot Fracture on X Ray		Total
		Positive	Negative	
Ankle/foot Fracture on Ottawa Rule	Positive	91	21	112
	Negative	24	39	63
Total		115	60	175

**Table-IV. Cross-tabulation of ankle/foot fracture on Ottawa rule and ankle/foot fracture on X-Ray**

Sensitivity:  $TP/TP + FN = 82.1\%$

Specificity:  $TN/TN + FP = 67.6\%$

Positive Predictive Value:  $TP/TP + FP = 84.2\%$

Negative Predictive Value:  $TN/TN + FN = 64.1\%$

## DISCUSSION

The Ottawa Ankle Rule was developed for avoidance of unnecessary exposure to radiation. One study showed that Ottawa Ankle Rule is recognized the test tool, however its use was limited. Most of the doctors' objective is; diagnosis of missed fractures and therefore they want maximum sensitivity at all costs.<sup>12</sup>

It was showed that 80% to 98% of patients having ankle or foot injuries has to do X-rays during initial evaluation which shows less than 15% of fracture. This results in undue radiation exposure, increased health care costs and more waiting time for management.<sup>13,14</sup> Stiell et al<sup>9</sup> recommends radiography of the midfoot for patients with bone tenderness at the base of the fifth metatarsal, cuboid or navicular.

The purpose of Ottawa Ankle Rules was the high sensitivity for of detection of significant fractures. Stiell et al<sup>9</sup> has ignored the specificity (range = 26.3%–39.8%) in favor of high sensitivity. In our study, the sensitivity of OAR was found to be 81.2% and specificity 61.9%. The positive predictive value of the OAR is 79.1% and negative predictive value is 65.0%. Bachmann et al<sup>15</sup> showed accuracy of the Ottawa Ankle Rules by a quality systematic review of the literature.

There is evidence that OAR as an accurate clinical instrument to exclude fractures of the ankle. The OAR has a sensitivity of almost 100%.<sup>16,17</sup> The sensitivity of the OAR in our study was 81.2%. These results are similar to those reported in other studies.<sup>18-21</sup>

In another study reported by Dwivedi et al<sup>22</sup>, 13 out of 81 cases has significant fractures. Sensitivity of OAR for detecting fractures was 100%. Study done by Leddy et al<sup>17</sup> shows 11 fractures. In his series of 132 patients, the Ottawa Ankle Rules had reduced the need for x-rays by 34%, which has sensitivity of 100%, and specificity of 37%. In another study report, OAR detected no injury in 17 patients without prior X-ray.<sup>23</sup> In a meta analysis it was concluded that, Ottawa ankle rules is an accurate tool for exclusion of fractures around the foot.<sup>24</sup>

A meta-analysis of 12 studies having 3,130 patients in which 671 fractures were identified which shows the prevalence of 21.4%. The sensitivity of OAR was 98.5% in that study. It suggest that the OAR can rule out a fracture around the foot.<sup>25</sup>

Pires et al<sup>26</sup> study showed thirteen percent fracture by OAR. The Ottawa ankle rules showed the sensitivity of 97.2%, specificity of 7.8%, positive predictive value of 13.9%, negative predictive value of 95% and accuracy of 19.9% respectively and as reported by Wang et al<sup>27</sup> reported that sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value and negative predictive value of the OAR for detection of fractures of the ankle were 96.8%, 45.8%, 48.4% and 96.5%, respectively.

All these studies show that the Ottawa ankle rules have high sensitivity. It is an important tool in deciding for X-rays need in around the foot fractures and we strongly recommend the Ottawa ankle rules for ankle and foot injuries which reduce the need of unnecessary X-rays and additional expenses.

## CONCLUSION

Ottawa Ankle Rule can be used as a first line technique for the assessment of patients suspected fractures around the foot as our study

showed it has an acceptable sensitivity and specificity. X-ray on the other hand carries risk of radiation and also not available specially in remote health facilities, but gold standard for the assessment of fractures of any kind.

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*“Truth is not diminished by the number of people who believe it.”*

**Unknown**

**AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION**

Sr. #	Author-s Full Name	Contribution to the paper	Author=s Signature
1	Mohammad Shabir	Writing of manuscript & compiling results.	
2	Shahid Iqbal	Data collection & writing of manuscript.	
3	Muhammad Inam	Statistical analysis	
4	Arif Shehzad	Designing of project	
5	Ihsanullah	Guidance in writing the manuscript	