

Ottawa Ankle Rules Compliance in Emergency Department X-ray Requests

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Background

The Ottawa Ankle Rules are a validated clinical decision tool used to determine the need for radiography following ankle injury, and have been shown to reduce unnecessary X-ray requests without missing significant fractures. Despite their wide adoption nationally, compliance in busy Emergency Departments can be variable. A review of ankle and midfoot X-ray requesting behaviour at GSTT was undertaken to assess adherence to this evidence-based guideline.

Aims

To assess the degree of compliance with the Ottawa Ankle Rules when requesting ankle and foot X-rays in the Emergency Department at GSTT.

Objectives

1. Identify a consecutive cohort of patients who received ankle or midfoot X-rays following acute injury. 2. Assess whether documented clinical findings met Ottawa Ankle Rule criteria for imaging. 3. Calculate the proportion of requests consistent with guideline recommendations. 4. Present findings to the Emergency Department and orthopaedic team to inform future practice.

Guidelines

Ottawa Ankle Rules (Stiell et al.)

Keywords

Ottawa ankle rules, ankle fracture, X-ray, emergency department, clinical decision rules, radiography