

Systemic reaction to calcium phosphate after retrograde repair of a osteochondral lesion of the talus

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Introduction: Osteochondral lesions of the talus (OLTs) is a common pathology involving hyaline cartilage and/or underlying bone. Surgical decision making of OLT repair is reliant on the location of the OLT and quality of the cartilage and the bone. Retrograde drilling of the subchondral bone is a common modality for repair of OLTs. This is a case report of a systemic reaction to the graft material during the immediate post-operative after a retrograde drilling.

Case Report: A 34 year old female presented with chronic pain in the left ankle. Imaging revealed a posterior-medial OLT. The patient agreed to and underwent an ankle arthroscopy with extensive debridement and a retrograde drilling of the OLT with with the use of 1.6cc of calcium phosphate to "backfill" the retrograde drilling. Approximately 24-36 hours after the surgery, the patient presented to the emergency room with a fever of 101.6, chills, tachycardia and severe left ankle/lower leg pain. Exam of the left lower extremity showed no signs of any infective process. X-rays of the left ankle showed a large amount of osseous appearing debris along the soft tissue plane of the ankle. The patient was diagnosed with a "fever of unknown origin" (FUO). Serial radiographs during the post-operative period has shown significant gradual decrease in the appearance osseous material at the 4 week, 8 week, and 12 weeks. The patient has not reported any additional fevers. She does report pain along the intermediate dorsal cutaneous nerve where some of the graft material continues to absorb.