A Wii™-Related Clay-Shoveler's Fracture

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Clay-shoveler's fractures are fatigue fractures of lower cervical or upper thoracic vertebral spinous processes. They are stable and normally managed conservatively, but occasionally require surgery for pain relief[1]. There are a number of reports of injuries, including fractures, which have been sustained during activities using game consoles[2]. To our knowledge, this is the first published report of a clay-shoveler's fracture attributable to using a Wii™ games console.

A 38-year-old man presented to the accident and emergency department complaining of severe neck pain. The patient reported that this injury had started immediately after swinging his Wii™ game console control during a rather vigorous game with his son. No other possible cause could be established and he was not found to have any neurological abnormalities on examination. He had previously suffered from very mild posterior cervical pain following a road traffic accident 6 years previously. X-rays demonstrated an acute fracture of the C7 spinous process. He was treated with immobilization in a soft collar followed by physiotherapy. Three months later, his posterior neck pain persisted and he therefore elected to have the fracture fragment excised. His symptoms resolved.

REFERENCES

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