Comparable incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cementless and cemented unicompartmental knee arthroplasty: a systematic review and meta-analysis

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Abstract
Purpose (I) To determine the incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cemented and cementless unicompartmental knee arthroplasty (UKA) and (II) to summarize the existing evidence on characteristics and risk factors of periprosthetic fractures in UKA.

Methods Pubmed, Cochrane and Embase databases were comprehensively searched. Any clinical, laboratory or case report study describing information on proportion, characteristics or risk factors of periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA was included. Proportion meta-analysis was performed to estimate the incidence of fractures only using data from clinical studies. Information on characteristics and risk factors was evaluated and summarized.

Results A total of 81 studies were considered to be eligible for inclusion. Based on 41 clinical studies, incidences of fractures were 1.24% (95%CI 0.64–2.41) for cementless and 1.58% (95%CI 1.06–2.36) for cemented UKAs (9451 UKAs). The majority of fractures in the current literature occurred during surgery or presented within 3 months postoperatively (91 of 127; 72%) and were non-traumatic (95 of 113; 84%). Six different fracture types were observed in 21 available radiographs. Laboratory studies revealed that an excessive interference fit (press fit), excessive tibial bone resection, a sagittal cut too deep posteriorly and low bone mineral density (BMD) reduce the force required for a periprosthetic tibial fracture to occur. Clinical studies showed that periprosthetic tibial fractures were associated with increased body mass index and postoperative alignment angles, advanced age, decreased BMD, female gender, and a very overhanging medial tibial condyle.

Conclusion Comparable low incidences of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cementless and cemented UKA can be achieved. However, surgeons should be aware that an excessive interference fit in cementless UKAs in combination with an impaction technique may introduce an additional risk, and could therefore be less forgiving to surgical errors and patients who are at higher risk of periprosthetic tibial fractures.

Level of evidence V.

Keywords Periprosthetic fractures · Tibial plateau fractures · Complications · Failure modes · Unicompartmental knee arthroplasty · Partial knee replacement · UKA · PKR
**Introduction**

Unicompartmental knee arthroplasty (UKA) is a well-established treatment for patients with isolated compartmental knee arthritis. Advantages of UKA over total knee arthroplasty (TKA) include reduced morbidity and mortality, preservation of normal knee kinematics and faster recovery [35, 49, 59]. However, national registry data have shown lower revision rates after TKA in comparison to UKA [49, 66]. Reasons for UKA revision include aseptic loosening, malalignment, progression of osteoarthritis, instability, infection and periprosthetic fractures [49, 66].

Periprosthetic fractures represent a complex complication with serious consequences in UKA and have been associated with increased mortality and morbidity [26]. The periprosthetic fractures in UKA are most commonly reported on the tibial side (approximately 87%) [66]. Although these periprosthetic tibial fractures are relatively rare compared to other complications in UKA, recent registry-based studies have shown an increased rate of periprosthetic fractures in cementless UKAs compared to cemented UKAs [49, 63]. Since the interest of cementless fixation for UKAs is expected to increase, the rate of periprosthetic fractures may increase as well [49, 63]. However, registry-based studies may not provide reliable information about all fractures, as some periprosthetic fractures are internally fixed and the components are not revised or are treated conservatively. Another common limitation of registry-based studies is that tibial and femoral periprosthetic fractures are not reported separately. This stresses the need for a thorough evaluation of the incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cemented and cementless UKAs using clinical studies. Furthermore, there is a lack of studies providing an overview of the available evidence on characteristics and risk factors of periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA to gain a better understanding and awareness.

Therefore, the primary study aim was to estimate the incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cemented and cementless UKAs using clinical studies. Secondly, relevant studies were systematically reviewed to summarize characteristics and risk factors of periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA. Based on earlier large case series of both cemented and cementless UKAs reporting no non-traumatic periprosthetic tibial fractures [62, 68], it was hypothesized that comparable low incidences of periprosthetic tibial fractures can be achieved as long as surgeons are aware of factors that could increase the risk.

**Methods**

**Search strategy**

This systematic review with meta-analysis was conducted according to the PRISMA guidelines [65]. Medline, Cochrane and Embase databases were comprehensively searched on 28 May 2020. The database search included several combinations of key terms: "unicompartmental", "knee", "arthroplasty", "failure", "complication", "survival", "survivorship", "revision", "reoperation", "fracture" and "collapse". The search was, however, limited to English language studies published since 2000. After duplicates were excluded, titles and abstracts were screened by two independent reviewers (** & ***). Subsequently, full texts of the potential studies were carefully assessed by the two reviewers to confirm study eligibility. To be eligible, the study needed to contain information on proportion, characteristics and/or risk factors of periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA. Clinical studies with information on fixation type and proportion were used to estimate incidences. For information regarding characteristics and/or risk factors, any study design was considered eligible, including case reports and laboratory studies. Although case reports and laboratory studies constitute low-level evidence, a systematic review of such studies can provide a better understanding and awareness of tibial plateau fractures in UKA. Studies were excluded if they reported on bicompartamental UKAs, used the same database, were reviews, registry-based studies, commentaries or abstracts. References of the included studies were checked for any missing studies. Any disagreements on study eligibility were resolved through consultation of the third reviewer (**).
were evaluated and summarized. Finally, conclusions of laboratory studies were presented.

**Methodological quality assessment**

Different tools for methodological quality assessment were used depending on study design. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) checklist was used for all clinical studies [67], The Case Report (CARE) checklist was used for case reports [29], and the Quality Appraisal for Cadaveric Studies (QUACS) checklist [90] was used for cadaveric studies. A score was provided for each article (poor, fair or good). The assessment was performed by two independent reviewers (*** & ****) and disagreements of the level of study quality were resolved through consultation of the third reviewer (**).

**Statistical analyses**

Incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures was calculated as the number of fractures divided by the total number of UKAs from each clinical study. These data were combined via proportion meta-analysis [94]. This is a tool to calculate an overall proportion from studies reporting a single proportion. Combined proportions were determined for cementless and cemented UKAs. A subgroup analysis was performed for cementless and cemented Oxford Partial Knee Implants. Effect sizes and 95% Confidence Intervals (CI) were determined using a random-effects model by the back-transformation of the weighted mean of the logit-transformed proportions with Dersimonian weights. Characteristics between patients with and without periprosthetic tibial fractures were compared using the chi-square test for categorical variables and independent t test for continuous variables. All analyses were performed with R version 4.0.0 (R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria).

**Results**

A total of 81 studies were included (Fig. 1). Fifty-eight (72%) were clinical studies consisting of 30 retrospective case series (52%) [1–6, 8–11, 14, 27, 31, 36, 37, 43–45, 47, 48, 53, 54, 70, 73, 83, 85, 88, 91, 93, 96], 14 prospective case series (26%) [7, 17, 18, 32, 51, 55–58, 61, 77, 78, 86, 95], seven retrospective cohort studies (12%) [13, 24, 25, 46, 50, 59, 72], four prospective cohort studies (7%) [28, 30, 84, 89] and three randomized controlled trials (5%) [22, 23, 33]. Ten (12%) studies were case reports [15, 40, 52, 60, 69, 74, 81, 82, 87, 92]. Thirteen (16%) were laboratory studies, of which four (31%) used sawbones [16, 20, 39, 64], four (31%) finite element models [41, 42, 75, 76], three (23%) human cadavers [21, 79, 80] and two (15%) a combination of finite element models with sawbones [19, 71]. The quality of studies was considered to be good in 54 (67%) studies, fair in 26 (32%) studies, and poor in one (1%) study. Table 1 summarizes the conclusions and quality assessment of the laboratory studies. Appendix 1 and 2 summarize the data extraction and quality assessment of the case reports and clinical studies, respectively.

**Incidence of fixation type**

The incidence of each fixation type was determined using 44 clinical studies [1, 3, 5–10, 17, 18, 22, 23, 28, 30–33, 36, 43–46, 48, 50, 51, 53–59, 61, 70, 72, 73, 83–86, 89, 91, 93, 96], leading to an incidence of 1.24% (95% CI 0.64–2.41) for cementless and 1.58% (95% CI 1.06–2.36) for cemented UKAs (Fig. 2). Subgroup analysis for the Oxford Partial Knee implants was performed using 21 clinical studies [1, 3, 10, 17, 18, 30, 33, 44, 46, 48, 51, 53–55, 58, 59, 70, 72, 73, 83, 85, 96], resulting in an incidence of 1.22% (95% CI 0.60–2.49) for cementless and 0.99% (95% CI 0.62–1.59) for cemented fixation (Fig. 3).

**Characteristics**

A total of 202 periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA were reported in 58 clinical studies [1–4, 6–11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22–25, 27, 28, 30–33, 36, 37, 43–48, 50, 51, 53–59, 61, 70, 72, 73, 77, 78, 83–86, 88, 89, 91, 93, 95, 96] and ten case reports [15, 40, 52, 60, 69, 74, 81, 82, 87, 92]. The time of fracture was noted for 127 fractures. Twenty-three fractures (18%) occurred during the operation, 68 (54%) presented within 3 months postoperatively, 19 (15%) presented between 4 and 12 months postoperatively, and 17 (13%) presented after 1 year postoperatively. Fracture mechanism was reported for 113 fractures with 95 (84%) being non-traumatic.

Twenty-one fractures (10%) had good-quality radiographs to assess the location of the fracture line [6, 14, 33, 40, 45, 48, 52, 69, 74, 81, 85, 87, 88, 92]. Schematic drawings of the different fracture types are displayed in Fig. 4.
Based on information from 167 fractures, 85 (51%) periprosthetic tibial fractures were treated with TKA (with metal augmentation and/or tibial stem extension), 38 (23%) with ORIF, and 44 (26%) with conservative treatment. Authors reported that eight fractures, initially treated conservatively, underwent a subsequent TKA; six fractures, initially treated with ORIF, underwent a subsequent TKA; one fracture, initially treated conservatively, underwent ORIF; and one fracture, initially treated conservatively, underwent ORIF and eventually needed a TKA.

**Risk factors**

Factors related to periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA were analyzed using 23 clinical studies Table 2 [1, 8–10, 13, 18, 23–25, 28, 31, 32, 37, 43, 47, 48, 57, 61, 86, 89, 91, 93, 96]. Fractures were associated with increased BMI ($p=0.017$), advanced age ($p=0.003$), decreased bone mineral density (BMD) ($p=0.030$), female gender ($p=0.011$), increased postoperative tibia-femoral alignment ($p=0.0120$) and a very overhanging medial tibial condyle (< 0.001). The definition of a very overhanging medial tibial condyle was based on the medial eminence line (MEL) described by Yoshi-kawa et al. [96]. The MEL is a line drawn on preoperative radiographs, that is parallel to the tibial axis passing through the tip of medial intercondylar eminence. If this line passes medial to the medial cortex of the tibia, knees were classified as having a very overhanging medial tibial condyle. Fractures were not associated with the postoperative level of patient activity ($p=0.976$) or with the tibial component alignment angle in the coronal plane ($p=0.130$).
### Table 1 Summary of laboratory studies

| Study                          | Country | Study type       | Implant                                      | Summary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Study quality |
|-------------------------------|---------|------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Campi et al. [16]             | UK      | Sawbone          | Oxford (Biomet)                              | This study suggests that decreasing the press fit of the tibial keel of the cementless UKA would significantly decrease the push-in force required to insert the tibial component (and so decrease the risk of fracture), without reducing the pull-out force and therefore ensuring the same level of primary stability                                                                 | Good         |
| Chang et al. [19]             | Taiwan  | FE model & Sawbone | Miller-Galante II, cemented (Zimmer)         | This study suggests that in UKA, rounding the resection corner during preparation of the tibial plateau decreases the strain on tibial bone and avoid degenerative remodeling, in comparison to a standard rectangular corner. This modified surgical technique using a predrilled tunnel through the tibia prior to cutting could avoid extended vertical saw cutting errors | Good         |
| Clarius et al. [20]           | Germany | Sawbone          | Oxford (Biomet)                              | This study suggests several sawing errors can occur during preparation of the tibial plateau (extended vertical cuts which may reduce the stability of the medial tibial plateau, extended horizontal cuts, perforation of the posterior cortex) and femoral condyle (ascending cut at the posterior femoral condyle) in UKA, especially with inexperienced surgeons | Good         |
| Clarius et al. [21]           | Germany | Cadaver          | Oxford UKA (Biomet)                          | This study suggests that extended sagittal saw cuts in UKA weaken the tibial bone structure and increase the risk of periprosthetic tibial plateau fractures. In addition, this study showed that UKA patients with low BMD are at higher risk, as the fracture load is dependent on the bone density | Good         |
| Iesaka et al. [41]            | Japan   | FE model         | NR                                           | In UKA, placing the tibial component in slight valgus inclination is preferred to varus or square inclination as it results in more even stress distributions                                                                                                                                  | Fair         |
| Inoue et al. [42]             | Japan   | FE model         | Metal-backed tibia, cemented                 | This study suggests that the risk of medial tibial condylar fractures in UKA increases with increasing valgus inclination of the tibial component and with increased extension of the sagittal cut in the posterior tibial cortex                                                                                           | Good         |
| Mohammad et al. 2018          | UK      | Sawbone          | Oxford, cementless (Zimmer Biomet)           | This study suggests to use a new wider and deeper keel cut saw blade in UKA as it decreases the risk of tibial fracture compared to the standard keel cut saw blade, with no compromise in fixation                                                                                                                                                                               | Good         |
| Sasatani et al. 2019          | Japan   | FE model         | Persona (Zimmer Biomet)                      | This study suggests that the optimal alignment of the tibial implant in UKA is the middle position the coronal plane and the original posterior inclination in the sagittal plane                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Good         |
| Sawatari et al. 2005          | Japan   | FE model         | SCR UKA, metal-backed tibia, cemented (Stryker) | This study suggests that in UKA, placing the tibial component in slight valgus inclination is recommended due to reduced stress on tibial cancellous bone, in comparison with varus or square inclination. However, excessive posterior slope should be avoided                                                                 | Good         |
Authors considerations

Authors reported their considerations of cause of fracture in 36 clinical studies [1, 2, 4–11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 23, 30, 31, 33, 36, 37, 43–45, 54, 55, 57, 61, 70, 84, 85, 88, 89, 91, 93, 95, 96] and nine case reports [15, 40, 52, 60, 69, 74, 81, 82, 87, 92] (Table 3).

Discussion

The main study finding was that the incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cemented and cementless UKA was comparable. However, experimental evidence showed that excessive interference fit (press fit), excessive resection depth, making the sagittal cut too deep posteriorly, and low BMD reduces the load required for a periprosthetic tibial fracture to occur. Furthermore, clinical studies revealed that patients with fractures were more often female, of older age, exhibited higher BMI and postoperative alignment angles, had lower BMD and had very overhanging medial tibial condyles.

Contrarily to the main finding of this study, two recent registry-based studies showed higher rates of periprosthetic fractures in cementless compared to cemented Oxford Partial Knee implants [49, 63], raising some concerns regarding a keel design in cementless techniques. Campi et al. demonstrated that fixation of the cementless mobile-bearing Oxford UKA is ensured by the interference fit [18]. However, an excessive interference increases the assembly load required to push-in the component potentially introducing a splitting force during impaction (type V fracture) [16]. As this interference fit, combined with an impaction technique, could introduce an additional risk factor for fractures, the cementless Oxford Partial Knee implant may be less forgiving to surgical errors and patients who are at higher risk of periprosthetic tibial fractures.

Several surgical errors have been proposed by authors to cause periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA Table (3). Only a few authors have supported their conclusion with experimental evidence. Laboratory studies showed a vertical saw cut too distal in the posterior tibial cortex and excessive tibial bone resection reduces the load required for a fracture to occur [20, 21, 39, 71]. Additionally, laboratory studies on the role of tibial component alignment suggested valgus alignment and an excessive posterior slope should be avoided [41, 42, 76]. Other authors based their conclusions on radiographic or intraoperative findings. Radiographs revealed that fracture lines went through multiple pinholes of the extramedullary tibial guide (type II fracture) [15]. One author reported that a fracture occurred due to breaching the posterior cortex while using a tibial gouge for keel preparation in Oxford Partial Knee implants (type V fracture) [82].
Furthermore, one fracture occurred after breaching the tibial cortex with the screw to fixate a cementless fixed-bearing UKA (type VI) [87]. These findings indicate that surgical actions that weaken cortical bone or reduce the bony area under the tibial component increase the risk of fracture. However, more studies evaluating fractures under different conditions in UKA are necessary to understand the main pathologic elements of periprosthetic tibial fractures.

It was further noted that female gender, higher BMI and age, osteoporosis, excessive postoperative alignment

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### Fig. 2 Proportion meta-analysis to estimate the incidence of fractures in cemented (a) and cementless (b) unicompartmental knee arthroplasty

#### a

| Author, Year | Fractures | Total | Proportion (%) | [95% C.I.] |
|--------------|-----------|-------|----------------|-----------|
| Lindstrand et al., 2000 | 2 | 123 | 1.63 | [0.41; 6.27] |
| Confalonieri et al., 2004 | 1 | 40 | 2.50 | [0.35; 15.73] |
| Gesell et al., 2004 | 1 | 47 | 2.13 | [0.30; 13.62] |
| Gleeson et al., 2004 | 1 | 104 | 0.96 | [0.14; 6.51] |
| Rajasekhar et al., 2004 | 1 | 135 | 0.74 | [0.10; 5.07] |
| Berend et al., 2005 | 3 | 73 | 4.11 | [1.33; 11.98] |
| Berger et al., 2005 | 3 | 49 | 6.12 | [1.99; 17.33] |
| Forster et al., 2007 | 1 | 30 | 3.33 | [0.47; 20.20] |
| Kort et al., 2007 | 1 | 154 | 0.65 | [0.09; 4.46] |
| Lombardi Jr. et al., 2009 | 2 | 115 | 1.74 | [0.44; 6.68] |
| Marya et al., 2009 | 1 | 29 | 3.45 | [0.48; 20.79] |
| Song et al., 2009 | 2 | 100 | 2.00 | [0.50; 7.64] |
| Biswal et al., 2010 | 2 | 128 | 1.56 | [0.39; 6.03] |
| Costa et al., 2011 | 4 | 34 | 11.76 | [4.49; 27.46] |
| Geller et al., 2011 | 2 | 64 | 3.12 | [0.78; 11.65] |
| Lisowski et al., 2011 | 1 | 244 | 0.41 | [0.06; 2.85] |
| Berend et al., 2012 | 1 | 100 | 1.00 | [0.14; 6.75] |
| Bhattacharya et al., 2012 | 1 | 91 | 1.10 | [0.15; 7.39] |
| Smith et al., 2012 | 1 | 187 | 0.53 | [0.08; 3.70] |
| Weber et al., 2012 | 1 | 40 | 2.50 | [0.35; 15.73] |
| Thompson et al., 2013 | 2 | 229 | 0.87 | [0.22; 3.42] |
| Woo et al., 2013 | 6 | 986 | 0.62 | [0.28; 1.38] |
| Akhtar et al., 2014 | 1 | 76 | 1.32 | [0.19; 8.75] |
| Hamilton et al., 2014 | 2 | 517 | 0.39 | [0.10; 1.53] |
| Ji et al., 2014 | 1 | 246 | 0.41 | [0.06; 2.83] |
| Song et al., 2016 | 2 | 68 | 2.94 | [0.74; 11.01] |
| Kerens et al., 2017 | 1 | 60 | 1.67 | [0.23; 10.90] |
| Kim et al., 2017 | 1 | 82 | 1.22 | [0.17; 8.15] |
| Koh et al., 2017 | 3 | 101 | 2.97 | [0.96; 8.81] |
| Alnachoukati et al., 2018 | 1 | 707 | 0.14 | [0.02; 1.00] |
| Pongcharoen et al., 2018 | 1 | 201 | 0.50 | [0.07; 3.44] |
| Gill et al., 2019 | 1 | 466 | 0.21 | [0.03; 1.51] |
| Kaneko et al., 2019 | 4 | 61 | 6.56 | [2.48; 16.21] |
| Lim et al., 2019 | 1 | 263 | 0.38 | [0.05; 2.65] |
| Yokoyama et al., 2019 | 12 | 167 | 7.19 | [4.13; 12.23] |

**Random effects model**

| Proportion (%) | [95% C.I.]
|----------------|-----------|
| **6097** | 1.58 | [1.06; 2.36] |
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#### b

| Author, Year | Fractures | Total | Proportion (%) | [95% C.I.] |
|--------------|-----------|-------|----------------|-----------|
| Jeer et al., 2004 | 1 | 66 | 1.52 | [0.21; 9.98] |
| Liddle et al., 2013 | 4 | 1000 | 0.40 | [0.15; 1.06] |
| Lecuire et al., 2014 | 1 | 65 | 1.54 | [0.22; 10.12] |
| Blaney et al., 2017 | 2 | 257 | 0.76 | [0.19; 3.06] |
| Kerens et al., 2017 | 1 | 60 | 1.67 | [0.23; 10.90] |
| Panzram et al., 2017 | 1 | 30 | 3.33 | [0.47; 20.20] |
| Campi et al., 2018 | 6 | 598 | 1.00 | [0.45; 2.21] |
| Campi et al., 2018 | 2 | 1000 | 0.20 | [0.05; 0.80] |
| Leenders et al., 2018 | 4 | 122 | 3.28 | [1.24; 8.41] |
| Yoshikawa et al., 2020 | 6 | 156 | 3.85 | [1.74; 8.30] |

**Random effects model**

| Proportion (%) | [95% C.I.]
|----------------|-----------|
| **3354** | 1.24 | [0.64; 2.41] |
angles and a very overhanging medial tibial condyle could contribute to the occurrence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA. The relationship with greater age and osteoporosis is not surprising as fractures have been directly linked to these factors [12]. The higher proportion of periprosthetic tibial fractures in females compared to males may be due to higher rate of osteoporosis [12], the smaller average size of tibial plateaus [97] and the higher likelihood of having very overhanging medial tibial condyles [38, 96] in females. The two latter reasons reduce the bone volume to support the tibial component which may increase the risk of fracture. As such, surgeons should avoid large tibial resections as well as peripheral positioning [39], especially in those with already little bone volume to support the tibial component. Further, the relationship of higher BMI and excessive postoperative alignment angles with periprosthetic tibial fractures may be explained by the excessive loads placed on the small tibial surface [40, 74, 84]. In addition, small medial femoral condyles needing small components might also be a risk factor leading to overload because of smaller contact areas at the medial tibial surface [34].

Despite surgeons should be aware of potential risk factors, current evidence underlines developments in instrumentation and implants can minimize fracture risk. Chang et al. showed a modified technique using a predrilled tunnel through the tibia prior to cutting could avoid extended vertical saw cut errors [19]. Campi et al. suggested the optimal interference fit for good implant stability and minimal risk of fracture is between 0.5 mm and 0.7 mm [16]. Moham mad et al. reported improvements in instrumentation that widen the keel slot could reduce the risk of tibial fractures in cementless Oxford Partial Knee implants without compromising fixation [64]. Some authors suggested to change the depth of the tibial keel in very small cementless Oxford Partial Knee components as the depth of the keel is currently the same in all components, increasing the risk of fracture [38]. Vardi et al. reported that a change was made to the shape and size of the tibial keel of the Alphanorm implant [38].

This study revealed that most of periprosthetic tibial fractures occurred intraoperatively or within 3 months of surgery and were non-traumatic. Studies of intraoperative fractures described that operative damage in combination with the impaction of the tibial component caused the tibial bone to fracture. The postoperative fractures within 3 months may be associated with operative damage and repetitive stress on the bone during daily activities such as walking and stair climbing. Fractures that presented after 3 months were mostly associated with traumatic events, excessive weight,
osteoporosis, infection, all-polyethylene designs and tibial component malposition.

Furthermore, a classification of periprosthetic tibial fracture types was presented. As only 10% of all fractures could be used in the classification, the incidence and completeness of fracture types in UKA remain unknown. However, presented paths of fractures could explain the high-risk fracture regions. For example, the type I fracture not only suggest that an extended sagittal cut posteriorly can initiate a fracture, but indicate that risk of fracture propagation can be increased by placing pins from the extramedullary tibial guide within fracture line regions.

Some limitations of this study should be noted. First, the pooled estimated incidences of fractures were not adjusted for the follow-up period. However, almost all clinical studies had a minimum follow-up of one year and thus included the period when the majority of fractures occurred. Second, poor reporting on characteristics of fractures may have biased the results. Third, not all risk factors for fractures in UKA mentioned by authors have been verified with clinical data, and therefore might be subjective. Also, it cannot be clarified which risk factors verified with clinical data were independently related to periprosthetic tibial fractures as the findings were based on unadjusted analyses. Fourth, to analyze whether increased BMI and age were related to fracture cases, the weighted mean of the overall UKA population was used with the same standard deviation as those of the periprosthetic tibial fracture cases. Although this approach can be considered a fair approximation, the statistical difference for BMI and age between UKAs with and without fractures may have been underestimated. Finally, this study did not focus on the diagnostics and treatment of periprosthetic tibial fracture in UKA. However, based on the current search, three studies have currently evaluated the management of periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA [14, 80, 91]. Treatments of the included fracture cases were reported.

Fig. 4 Periprosthetic tibial fracture types in unicompartmental knee arthroplasty (UKA) seen on radiographs. I–II: Fracture line extending from the corner of the tibial resection to the medial cortex, resulting in a large (I) or small (II) medial plateau fracture. These fracture lines were identified on the anteroposterior (AP) view in patients with different implant designs. III: Varus subsidence or anterior subsidence of the tibia component, resulting in a small medial fragment fracture. These fractures were identified on the AP view. IV: Fracture line extending from the screw fixation to the posterior cortex, resulting in a posteromedial plateau fracture. The fracture line could not be identified on the AP view but only on the lateral view in a patient with a cementless fixed-bearing UKA with screw fixation. V: Fracture line extending from the tibial keel to the medial cortex, resulting in a medial plateau fracture. These fracture lines were identified on the AP view in patients with Oxford Partial Knee implants. VI: Two fracture lines extending from the corner of the tibial resection to the medial and lateral cortex after traumatic event six years postoperatively, resulting in a bicondylar plateau fracture. The fracture line was identified on the AP view in a patient with a lateral UKA.
to give a complete overview. Despite the aforementioned limitations, this is the first study evaluating the incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cemented and cementless UKAs and providing an overview of the available evidence on periprosthetic tibial fracture in UKA.

### Conclusion

The incidence of periprosthetic tibial fractures in cementless UKAs can be similar to those seen in cemented UKAs. However, surgeons should be aware that an excessive interference fit for cementless UKAs in combination with an impaction technique may introduce an additional risk, and may, therefore, be less forgiving to surgical errors and patients who are at higher risk of periprosthetic tibial fractures. While findings of this study raise awareness about periprosthetic tibial fractures in UKA, this study also highlights the importance of improvements in instrumentation and implants to prevent periprosthetic tibial fractures in future practices.

### Appendix

See Tables 4, 5.

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**Table 2** Results of the comparison between UKAs without and with fractures

|                      | No. of clinical studies | No. of knees | Mean ± SD or % | P value§ |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------|
| Body mass index (kg/m²) | 4                      | UKAs without fractures 1379 | 26.3 ± 6.8* | 0.017 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 12 | 31.0 ± 6.8 |          |
| Age (yrs)            | 14                      | UKAs without fractures 2701 | 64.4 ± 9.2* | 0.003 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 24 | 70.0 ± 9.2 |          |
| Bone mineral density (g/m³) | 1                      | UKAs without fractures 155 | 0.73 ± 0.10 | 0.030 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 12 | 0.65 ± 0.16 |          |
| Tibial component angle (°) | 1                      | UKAs without fractures 155 | 4.19 ± 2.94 | 0.130 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 12 | 2.83 ± 2.69 |          |
| Postoperative Tibia-femoral Angle (°) | 1                      | UKAs without fractures 155 | 176.5 ± 3.6 | 0.012 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 12 | 179.3 ± 3.3 |          |
| Gender (Female/Male) | 20                      | UKAs without fractures 5910 | 67%/33% | 0.011 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 58 | 83%/17% |          |
| Activity level (High/Low)§ | 1                      | UKAs without fractures 566 | 20%/80% | 0.976 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 10 | 20%/80% |          |
| Very overhanging medial tibial condyle (Yes/No)† | 1                      | UKAs without fractures 150 | 12%/88% | <0.001 |
|                      |                         | UKAs with fractures 6 | 67%/33% |          |

§Chi square test was used for categorical variables and the independent t test for continuous variables

§Patients with an UCLA (University of California Los Angeles) activity score > 6 were classified as high

The weighted mean of the overall UKA population with the same standard deviation as the tibial plateau fracture cases was used to allow for a fair comparison. This means this is an estimation and not the exact mean with standard deviation of the UKAs without fractures

†Very overhanging medial tibial condyle was defined as a medial eminence line outside the medial cortex of the tibial shaft as described by Yoshikawa et al.[95]

**Table 3** Factors associated with periprosthetic tibial fractures considered by authors

| Implant and surgical factors                      |
|--------------------------------------------------|
| Excessive postoperative alignment angle          |
| Pin placement (excessive pins, not predrilled, too close to medial tibial cortex) |
| Excessive tibial bone resection                  |
| Vertical saw cut too distal in posterior tibial cortex |
| Excessive posterior slope                        |
| Error in keel preparation                        |
| Learning curve/introduction of new implant       |
| Limited instrumentation                          |
| Not enough medialization of the tibial component to tibial spine |
| Tibial peg hole drilled too deeply               |
| All-polyethylene design                          |
| Tibial subsidence or collapse                    |
| Undersizing or oversizing of tibia component     |
| Forceful impaction                               |

| Patient factors                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------|
| Infection                                       |
| Osteoporosis                                    |
| Overweight                                      |
| Small tibial size                                |
| Very overhanging medial tibial condyles          |
| Trauma                                          |

| Rehabilitation factor                            |
|--------------------------------------------------|
| Weightbearing too early                          |
| Study            | Country            | No. cases | Time point | UKA Laterality | Trauma | Gender | BMI (kg/m²) | Osteop | Age (year) | Implant         | Cement | Treatment            | Study Quality* |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|------------------|---------|---------------------|----------------|
| Brumby et al.    | Australia / USA    | 4         | 6 wks      | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | Yes     | 72          | NR, Fixed bearing | Yes     | Conservative > TKA  | Fair           |
|                  |                    |           | 3 mo       | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 57          | Yes Conservative > TKA | Yes     | TKA                 |                |
|                  |                    |           | 3 mo       | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | NR      | 65          | Yes Conservative > TKA | Yes     | TKA                 |                |
|                  |                    |           | 3 wks      | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 62          | NR               | NR      | TKA                 |                |
| Rudol et al.     | UK                 | 1         | 2 wks      | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | NR      | 80          | Oxford Phase 3 (Biomet) | Yes     | ORIF                | Fair           |
| Lu et al. 2019   | China              | 2         | 3 wks      | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | Yes     | 70          | NR               | NR      | ORIF                | Fair           |
|                  |                    |           | 2 wks      | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | Yes     | 72          | NR               | NR      | ORIF, Conservative  |                |
| Seon et al. [81] | South Korea        | 2         | 3 wks      | Medial         | No      | Female  | 29.6        | Yes     | 65          | Miller Galante (Zimmer) | Yes     | ORIF                | Fair           |
|                  |                    |           | 5 wks      | Medial         | No      | Female  | 32.1        | Yes     | 68          | Miller Galante (Zimmer) | Yes     | TKA                 |                |
| Sloper et al.    | UK                 | 1         | Intraop    | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | No      | 58          | Oxford (Biomet)     | -Yes    | -ORIF               | Fair           |
| Kumar et al.     | Canada             | 1         | 6 years    | Lateral        | Yes     | Female  | NR          | Yes     | 70          | NR               | Yes     | TKA                 | Good           |
| Van Loon et al.  | Belgium            | 3         | 6 days     | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 62          | Accuris (Smith & Nephew) | NR      | ORIF > TKA          | Fair           |
|                  |                    |           | Intraop    | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 57          | NR               | NR      | Conservative > TKA |                |
|                  |                    |           | Intraop    | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 45          | NR               | NR      | TKA                 |                |
| Yang et al. [92] | Singapore          | 2         | 5 mo       | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 60          | PFC Sigma (Johnson & Johnson) | NR      | TKA                 | Fair           |
|                  |                    |           | 3 mo       | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | NR      | 71          | PFC Sigma (Johnson & Johnson) | NR      | Conservative |                |
| Study           | Country | No. cases | Time point | UKA Laterality | Trauma | Gender | BMI (kg/m²) | Osteop | Age (year) | Implant     | Cement | Treatment  | Study Quality |
|----------------|---------|-----------|------------|----------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|------------|-------------|---------|------------|---------------|
| Pandit et al.  | UK      | 8         | Intraop    | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 72         | Oxford      | NR      | Conservative| Fair          |
|                |         |           | 6 wks      | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | NR      | 65         | (Biomet)    | NR      | Conservative|               |
|                |         |           | 10 wks     | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 55         | Oxford      | NR      | ORIF       |               |
|                |         |           | Intraop    | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 73         | (Biomet)    | NR      | Conservative|               |
|                |         |           | 4 wks      | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | NR      | 82         | Oxford      | NR      | Conservative|               |
|                |         |           | 12 wks     | Medial         | No      | Male    | NR          | NR      | 67         | (Biomet)    | NR      | Conservative|               |
|                |         |           | 24 wks     | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 76         | Oxford      | NR      | Conservative|               |
|                |         |           | 16 wks     | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | NR      | 67         | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
|                |         |           |            |                |         |         |             |         |            | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
|                |         |           |            |                |         |         |             |         |            | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
|                |         |           |            |                |         |         |             |         |            | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
|                |         |           |            |                |         |         |             |         |            | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
|                |         |           |            |                |         |         |             |         |            | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
|                |         |           |            |                |         |         |             |         |            | Oxford      | NR      | TKA        |               |
| Yuk Wah et al. | China   | 1         | 4 wks      | Medial         | No      | Female  | NR          | yes     | 75         | ZUK (Zimmer Biomet) | Yes     | ORIF > TKA | Good          |

UKA unicompartmental knee arthroplasty; BMI body mass index; ORIF open reduction internal fixation; NR not reported; TKA total knee arthroplasty

*Quality Appraisal for Cadaveric Studies (QUACS) checklist was used as a quality assessment tool.
### Table 5 Summary of clinical studies

| Study                  | Country | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design                  | Quality* |
|------------------------|---------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|----------|
| Akhtar et al. [1]      | UK      | 76 30 64 58    | 1 -2 mo -Medial | Case series, retrospective   | Good     |
| Aleto et al. [2]       | USA     | NR NR NR NR    | 15 -16 mo -14 NR | Case series, retrospective   | Good     |
| Alnachoukati et al. [3]| USA     | 707 32 64 45   | 1 -9.6 yrs -Medial | Case series, prospective     | Good     |
| Argenson et al. [4]    | France  | 38 26 61 62    | 1 -11 mo -Lateral | Case series, prospective     | Good     |
| Berend et al. [5]      | USA     | 100 30 68 70   | 1 -2 yrs -Lateral | Case series, prospective     | Good     |
| Berend et al. [6]      | USA     | 73 32 66 77    | 3 -1 mo -Medial | Case series, prospective     | Good     |
| Berger et al. [7]      | USA     | 49 NR 68 67    | 3 -Intraop -Medial | Case series, prospective     | Good     |
| Bhattacharya et al. [8]| UK      | 91 NR 68 58    | 1 -31 mo -Medial | Case series, retrospective   | Good     |
| Study                  | Country          | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design          | Quality |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------|
|                        |                  | Baseline (Knees) | Mean BMI | Mean Age | Female (%) | No. cases | Time point | UKA Laterality | Trauma | Gender | BMI (kg/m²) | Osteop | Age (yrs) | Implant | Cement | Treatment |
| Biswal et al. [9]     | Australia        | 128            | 29          | 68       | 49         | 2         | -10 mo    | -50 mo      | Medial | -No    | -NR       | -36.0   | -40.1    | Yes      | Yes     | TKA       |
| Blaney et al. [10]    | UK               | 257            | 30          | 65       | 48         | 2         | 2 wks     | 13 mo       | Medial | -No    | -Female -NR | -NR     | -NR     | -NR      | No     | ORIF      |
| Bohn et al. [11]      | Austria          | 278            | NR          | NR       | NR         | 1         | -1 wk     | -NR         | Medial | -No    | -NR       | -NR     | -NR     | -NR      | NR     | TKA       |
| Bonniti et al. [13]   | USA              | 80             | 33          | 66       | 45         | 1         | 9 mo      | -NR         | Medial | -No    | -Male -NR | -NR     | -NR     | -Fixed- bearing | NR     | -TKA       |
| Brown et al. [14]     | USA              | 2464           | NR          | NR       | NR         | 16        | Mean: 35 dys | Mean: 15 | Medial | -2 No    | -11 Female | -2 | 2 | -16 NR | -16 NR |
| Campi et al. [16]     | South Africa     | 522 cem.       | 65          | 49       | 6          | 6         | -NR       | -6 Medical  | -6 Medical | -6 Female | -6 Medical | -6 Medical | 6 No     | -6 -TKA  |
| Campi et al. [16]     | UK / New Zealand | 1000           | NR          | 66       | 45         | 2         | 1 mo      | -2 Medical  | -NR     | -NR    | -NR       | -Oxford | -2 ORIF | TKA      | TKA     |
| Confalonieri et al. [22] | Italy           | 40             | NR          | 70       | 53         | 1         | -Intraop   | -Medical    | -No     | -NR    | -NR       | -AMC    | -Yes    | ORIF     | -TKA    |
| Costa et al. [23]     | USA              | 34             | 30          | 73       | 44         | 4         | 2 mo      | -Medical    | -Medical | -Female -NR | -Yes    | -64     | -78       | -TKA    | -TKA     |

*Table 5 (continued)*
Table 5 (continued)

| Study          | Country | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design  | Quality |
|----------------|---------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------|
| Crawford et al. [24] | USA     | 576 32 62 59   | 10 -10 NR -10 NR Medial -10 NR -10 NR | Cohort study, retrospective | Fair    |
| Darrith et al. [25] | USA     | 178 31 55 37 1 | -NR -NR -Male -NR -68 -NR | Cohort study, retrospective | Fair    |
| Epinette et al. [27] | France  | NR NR NR NR   | 15 -15 NR -15 NR -10 No | Case series, retrospective | Fair    |
| Forster et al. [28] | Australia | 30 NR 67 53 1 | -Intraop -Lateral -No -Female -Yes -80 | Cohort study, prospective | Fair    |
| Geller et al. [30] | USA     | 64 31 67 59 2 | -NR -1 yr -No -NR | Cohort study, prospective | Good    |
| Gesell et al. [31] | USA     | 47 NR 68 59 1  | -10 dys -Media1 -NR -Medial -NR -NR | Case series, retrospective | Good    |
| Gill et al. [32] | UK      | 466 29 67 49 1 | -3 mo -Media1 -No | Case series, prospective | Good    |
| Gleeson et al. [33] | UK      | 104 NR 66 50 1 | -8 mo -Media1 -No -NR | RCT, prospective | Poor    |
| Hamilton et al. [36] | USA     | 517 29 66 62 2 | -5 mo -2 yrs -Media1 -NR | Case series, retrospective | Good    |
### Table 5 (continued)

| Study          | Country    | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design | Quality |
|----------------|------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|---------|
|                |            | Mean BMI | Mean Age | Female (%) | No. cases | Time point | UKA Laterality | Trauma | Gender | BMI (kg/m²) | Osteo Age (yrs) | Implant Treatment | Cement | Treatment    | Study design | Quality |
| Hamilton et al. [37] | USA       | 221       | 29       | 66         | 59         | 3         | -2 mo | -3 mo | -14 mo | Medial | -No          | -Female | -33       | -NR          | -64       | -Preservation (DePuy) | -NR | -TKA    | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Jeer et al. [43]   | Australia | 66        | NR       | 69         | NR         | 1         | -2 wks | Medial | -No    | Female | -NR         | -NR      | -64       | -Preservation (DePuy) | -Answer | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Ji et al. [44]     | South Korea | 246      | NR       | 64         | 84         | 1         | -Intraop | Medial | -No    | -NR    | -NR         | -NR      | -Conservative > TKA | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Kaneko et al. [45] | Japan     | 61        | NR       | 74         | 73         | 4         | -6 mo | -7 mo | -2 yr | -5 yr | -Media1 | -Yes | -Female | -NR          | -NR       | -Preservation ZUK (LIMA) | -Yes | -Conservative > TKA | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Kerens et al. [46] | Holland   | 60 cm less | 30       | 63         | 51         | 2         | -1 mo | -2 mo | -Media1 | -No    | -NR          | -NR      | -NR      | -NR          | -NR       | -Oxford (Biomet) | -Yes | -TKA    | Cohort study, retrospective | Fair |
| Kim et al. [47]    | South Korea | 197       | NR       | 62         | 90         | 5         | -Intraop | -Media1 | -No    | -Female | -NR         | -NR      | -ORIF > TKA | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Kim et al. [48]    | South Korea | 82        | 26       | 55         | 95         | 1         | -7 yrs | Medial | -No    | Female | -NR         | -NR      | -ORIF (Peck) | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Study          | Country         | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design | Quality* |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| Koh et al.    | South Korea     | 101            | 26             | 89           | 3        |
| Kort et al.   | Holland         | 154            | NR             | 56           | 67       |
| Lecuir et al. | France          | 65             | 28             | 72           | 72       |
| Leenders et al. | Holland       | 122            | 29             | 63           | 70       |
| Liddle et al. | UK              | 1000           | NR             | 66           | 43       |
| Lim et al.    | Singapore       | 263            | 26             | 63           | 72       |
| Lindstrand et al. | Sweden     | 123            | NR             | 72           | 70       |

**Table 5 (continued)**

| Study          | Country         | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design | Quality* |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| Koh et al.    | South Korea     | 101            | 26             | 89           | 3        |
| Kort et al.   | Holland         | 154            | NR             | 56           | 67       |
| Lecuir et al. | France          | 65             | 28             | 72           | 72       |
| Leenders et al. | Holland       | 122            | 29             | 63           | 70       |
| Liddle et al. | UK              | 1000           | NR             | 66           | 43       |
| Lim et al.    | Singapore       | 263            | 26             | 63           | 72       |
| Lindstrand et al. | Sweden     | 123            | NR             | 72           | 70       |

*Quality ratings based on study design and methodology.
### Table 5 (continued)

| Study | Country      | UKA population | Fracture cases | Study design | Quality |
|-------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|---------|
| Liowski et al. [58] | Holland | 244 | 28 | 72 | NR | 1 | -Intraop | -Medial | -No | -NR | -NR | -NR | -NR | -Oxford Phase 3 (Biomet) | -Yes | -Conservative | Case series, prospective | Good |
| Lombardi Jr et al. [59] | USA | 115 | 31 | 61 | 63 | 2 | -7 mo | -22 mo | -Medial | -Medial | -NR | -NR | -NR | -NR | -NR | -Oxford Phase 3 (Biomet) | -Yes | -Yes | TKA | TKA | Cohort study, retrospective | Good |
| Marya et al. [61] | India | 29 | NR | 83 | 16 | 1 | -Intraop | -Medial | -No | -Male | -NR | -NR | yes | 87 | -Allegretto (Zimmer) | -Yes | -ORIF | Case series, prospective | Good |
| Panzram et al. [70] | Germany | 30 | 28 | 63 | 44 | 1 | -1 mo | -Medial | -No | -NR | -NR | NR | NR | NR | -Oxford (Biomet) | -No | -ORIF&UKA | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Pongcharoen et al. [72] | Thailand | 201 | 27 | 64 | 75 | 1 | -3 mo | -Medial | -NR | -NR | -NR | NR | NR | NR | -Oxford (Zimmer-Biomet) | -Yes | -NR | Cohort study, retrospective | Good |
| Rajasekhar et al. [73] | UK | 135 | NR | 70 | 57 | 1 | -Intraop | -Medial | -No | -NR | -NR | NR | NR | NR | -Oxford Phase 2 (Biomet) | -Yes | -ORIF | Case series, retrospective | Fair |
| Saxler et al. [77] | Germany | 361 | NR | 70 | 67 | 1 | -Intraop | -Medial | -No | -NR | -NR | NR | NR | NR | -AMC (Corin) | -NR | -ORIF | Case series, prospective | Good |
| Schotanus et al. [54] | Holland | NR | NR | NR | NR | 1 | -7.1 yrs | -Medial | -NR | -Female | -NR | NR | 58 | -NR | -NR | -TKA | Case series, prospective | Good |
| Smith et al. 2012 | UK | 187 | NR | 65 | 68 | 1 | -Intraop | -Medial | -NR | -NR | -NR | -NR | -NR | -Oxford Phase 3 (Biomet) | -Yes | -TKA | Case series, retrospective | Good |
| Study            | Country  | Study design | Quality |
|------------------|----------|--------------|---------|
| Song et al. [44] | South Korea | Cohort study, prospective | Good |
| Song et al [85]  | South Korea | Case series, retrospective | Fair |
| Thompson et al. [86] | USA | Case series, prospective | Fair |
| Vardi et al. [88] | UK          | Case series, prospective | Fair |
| Weber et al. [89] | Germany     | Cohort study, prospective | Good |
| Woo et al. [91]  | Singapore   | Case series, prospective | Good |
| Yokoyama et al. [93] | Japan     | Case series, retrospective | Fair |
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