Complete rupture of the popliteal artery complicating high tibial osteotomy

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We present two cases of high tibial osteotomies performed at our institution. Both cases were complicated with the immediate postoperative occurrence of an ischaemic syndrome of the lower leg. Urgent diagnostics revealed a complete rupture of the popliteal artery that required re-operation and a vascular repair. Although neurovascular complications during high tibial osteotomies are rare the awareness of this potentially catastrophic complication should be present when performing this common procedure. All precautions to minimize the harm to the neurovascular bundle should be put into practice. A summary of the surgical precautions is presented and discussed in this paper.