Sacral insufficiency fractures: an unsuspected cause of low back pain

Sir, I read with interest the grand round of Dasgupta et al. [1]. I agree that pelvic insufficiency fractures may be missed if the diagnosis is not considered. In the 22 cases of pubic rami fractures in rheumatoid arthritis that I reported in 1993 [2], three patients had had no symptoms and 18 patients reported no or only mild effect on mobility. In contrast to the patients reported in the grand round, all but one of the 22 patients had an uneventful recovery with conservative management despite four patients having fractures of all four rami. This might suggest that sacral insufficiency fractures have a much greater mechanical impact on the pelvis and are thus more likely to contribute to immobility and poorer outcome.

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