AOSpine Upper Cervical Classification System

I. Occipital Condyle and Craniocervical Junction

Type A. Isolated bony injury (condyle)

Type B. Non-displaced ligamentous injury (craniocervical)

Type C. Any injury with displacement on spinal imaging

II. C1 Ring and C1-2 Joint

Type A. Isolated bony only (arch)

Type B. Ligamentous injury (transverse atlantal ligament)

Type C. Atlantoaxial instability / Translation in any plane

III. C2 and C2-3 Joint

Type A. Bony injury only without ligamentous, tension band, discal injury

Type B. Tension band / Ligamentous injury with or without bony injury

Type C. Any injury that leads to vertebral body translation in any directional plane

Upper Cervical Spine Fractures Overview

Neurology

Type

Description

N0
Neurologically intact

N1
Transient neurologic deficit

N2
Radiculopathy

N3
Incomplete Spinal cord injury

N4
Complete spinal cord injury

NR
Unexamable patient

N+
Continuous spinal cord compression

Modifiers

Type

Description

M1
Injuries at High Risk of Non-Union with Nonoperative Tx

M2
Vascular Injury or Abnormality Affecting Tx

M3
Injury with significant potential for instability

M4
Patient Specific Factors Affecting Tx

M5
M6

Classification nomenclature

OC Type C, N4

Atlanto-occipital dissociation with a complete spinal cord injury.

Further information:
www.aospine.org/classification