



# Stabilization of the radial head with the palmaris longus or the gracilis tendon: an anatomical feasibility study

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## Abstract

**Purpose** The proximal radioulnar joint (PRUJ) and the radiocapitellar joint may be destabilized after trauma. Different techniques for stabilization of PRUJ have been proposed, but none of them can stabilize the radiocapitellar joint at the same time. We propose a ligamentoplasty to stabilize the radial head at these two joints by reconstructing the radial head annular ligament and the lateral collateral ulnar ligament (LCUL) with a single graft (palmaris longus or gracilis tendon of the knee).

**Methods** Fifteen cadaveric upper limbs were used to compare the stabilization obtained by performing our ligamentoplasty with the palmaris longus or the gracilis tendon. For each technique, the stabilization obtained was evaluated by measuring the displacement of the radial head in the anterior, lateral and posterior directions when a force of 1 N was applied in maximum supination, neutral rotation and maximum pronation. We also evaluated whether this technique could damage the ulnar nerve or the posterior interosseous nerve by dissecting them and whether it could limit the range of rotation of the forearm.

**Results** Our ligamentoplasty enables to restore PRUJ stability equivalent to the intact ligament condition. The palmaris longus was inconstant (13/15) and too short to allow concomitant reconstruction of the LCUL (except in one case). No nerve damage was found during the dissection, and the range of rotation of the forearm was not limited by the ligamentoplasty. We also report a clinical case with an excellent result and without complications.

**Conclusion** This ligamentoplasty we have described makes it possible to stabilize the radial head with respect to the radial notch of the ulna and with respect to the capitellum of the humerus. The gracilis tendon is more suitable than the palmaris longus because of its constant presence and length. A clinical series is now necessary to better evaluate this technique.

**Keywords** Proximal radioulnar joint · Elbow ligamentoplasty · Radial head · Elbow instability

## Introduction

The radial head is an essential stabilizer of the elbow and forearm [1, 2]. It prevents valgus destabilization of the elbow in case of injury to the medial collateral ligament of the elbow. It also prevents proximal migration of the radius in case of longitudinal instability of the forearm (i.e., Essex-Lopresti injury). In order to ensure these functions, the radial head is articulated both with the capitulum of the humerus and with the radial notch of the ulna.

In case of injury to the lateral collateral ligament complex of the elbow [3], the joint between the radial head and the humeral capitulum (i.e., radiocapitellar) may be dislocated. In case of injury to the annular ligament of the radial head, the squared ligament of the elbow [4] and the interosseous membrane, the proximal radioulnar joint (PRUJ) may be dislocated [5, 6] as is the case with an Essex-Lopresti injury [7, 8], a crisscross injury [9], a Monteggia lesion [10–13] or

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42 an improper repair of the annular ligament after a surgical  
 43 approach of the radial head. In some patients, both the radio-  
 44 capitellar joint and the PRUJ can be destabilized together.

45 In order to stabilize the PRUJ, several surgical strategies  
 46 have been proposed (Table 1): reconstruction of the annular  
 47 ligament with the triceps brachii tendon [14, 15], the fore-  
 48 arm fascia or the palmaris longus [15–18]. Reconstruction of  
 49 the quadrate ligament was also proposed by using the exten-  
 50 sor carpi radialis longus tendon, but this technique involves  
 51 drilling a tunnel in the radius with an increased theoretical  
 52 risk of radius fracture [19]. However, these techniques only  
 53 stabilize the PRUJ, but not the radiocapitellar joint.

54 In order to overcome these limits, we have developed a  
 55 technique of ligamentoplasty to stabilize the radial head in  
 56 front of the humerus, but also in front of the ulna: a complete  
 57 and dynamic stabilization of the radial head by reconstructing  
 58 at the same time the lateral collateral ulnar ligament  
 59 (LCUL) of the elbow and the annular ligament of the radial  
 60 head (Fig. 1). The palmaris longus tendon seemed an ideal  
 61 candidate for this, but it is not constant in all individuals [20,  
 62 21]. In addition, the design of our ligamentoplasty requires  
 63 sufficient graft length and we feared that the palmaris longus  
 64 was not long enough. This is why we also wanted to evalu-  
 65 ate the possibility of using the gracilis tendon of the knee  
 66 as an alternative to the palmaris longus. Indeed this tendon  
 67 is constant and of a greater length than the palmaris longus.

68 The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the  
 69 anatomical feasibility of this ligamentoplasty technique  
 70 by using alternatively the palmaris longus and gracilis  
 71 tendons. The secondary objectives were to (1) evaluate

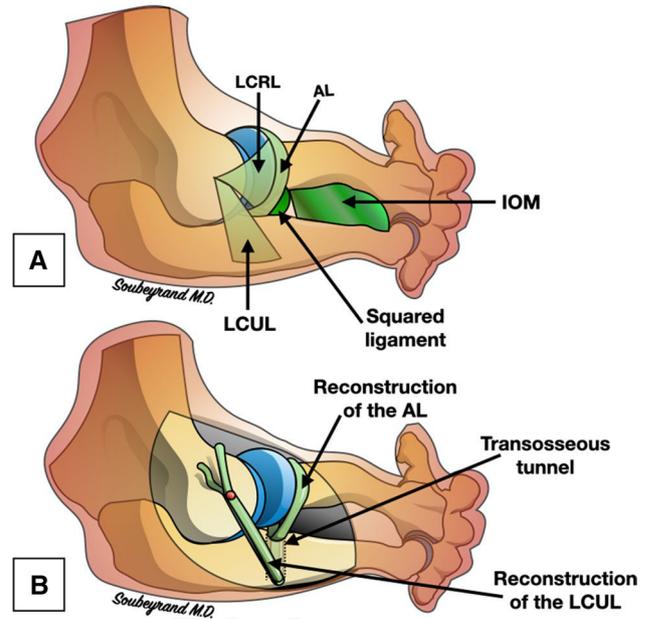


Fig. 1 The design of the ligamentoplasty allows simultaneous reconstruction of the radial head annular ligament (AL) as well as the lateral collateral ulnar ligament (LCUL). The AL is the primary stabilizer of the proximal radioulnar joint, while the interosseous membrane (IOM) and the squared ligament are secondary stabilizers

the biomechanical effect of this ligamentoplasty on PRUJ 72  
 stability and range of forearm rotation and (2) to evaluate 73  
 the anatomical danger of the procedure for the neighboring 74  
 neurovascular structures. 75

AQ1 5

Table 1 XXXX

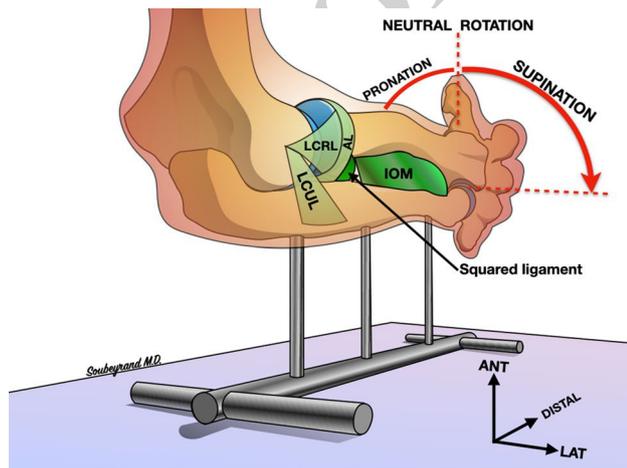
References	Type of study	Strategy proposed for management of the radial head instability	Used graft	Comments
[16]	Clinical study	Ligamentoplasty	Triceps tendon slip	
[14]	Clinical study	Ligamentoplasty	Triceps tendon slip	Initial paper describing the original Bell Tawse technique
[15]	Clinical study	Ligamentoplasty + Ulna osteotomy	Triceps tendon slip	
[28]	Clinical study	Osteotomy + Annular ligament repair + Temporary pinning	N/A	Of a consecutive series of 39 Monteggia lesions, 8 were initially undiagnosed
[30]	Case report	Temporary pinning	N/A	Neglected Type I Monteggia Fracture Dislocation in Adult: surgery performed at 3 months post-trauma
[17]	Clinical study	Ulna bending osteotomy + Ligamentoplasty	Palmaris longus	22 patients with neglected Monteggia fracture: the graft was used to increase the length of the annular ligament torn in the trauma
[33]	Clinical study	Ulna osteotomy + Bell Tawse technique	Triceps tendon slip	21 patients with neglected Monteggia fracture
[32]	Clinical study	Ulna osteotomy with overcorrection of the angular deformity and bone elongation	N/A	9 patients with chronic post-traumatic dislocation of the radial head: Initial paper describing the original Hirayama technique
[37]	Clinical study	Ligamentoplasty	Palmaris longus	
[38]	Clinical study	Ligamentoplasty	Allograft	
[36]	Clinical study	Ligamentoplasty	Triceps tendon slip	

## 76 Materials and methods

77 This is a cadaveric experimental study involving 15 upper  
78 limbs of patients who had donated their bodies to our insti-  
79 tution. The upper limbs were disarticulated at the gleno-  
80 humeral joint. Specimens with scars, instability, stiffness (in  
81 flexion–extension of the elbow or in pronation–supination)  
82 and deformity of the elbow or forearm were excluded.

### 83 Experimental protocol for evaluating radial head 84 stabilization with ligamentoplasty

85 For each specimen, the elbow was approached through a  
86 posterolateral approach. As a reminder, on the lateral side  
87 of the elbow is the lateral collateral ligamentous complex of  
88 the elbow [3]. The latter is composed of the lateral collat-  
89 eral ulnar ligament (LCUL), the annular ligament (AL) and  
90 the radial collateral ligament (RCL) [3]. The LCUL and the  
91 RCL are inserted on the lateral epicondyle: The first one is  
92 also inserted on the ulna, while the other end of the second  
93 is inserted on the annular ligament. On the ulnar side of  
94 the elbow is the medial ulnar collateral ligament (MUCL),  
95 inserted on both the medial epicondyle and the ulna [22].  
96 The RCL and the anterior capsule were severed in order to  
97 dislocate the elbow. The MUCL and posterior capsule were  
98 left intact as well as the AL. This allowed the PRUJ to be  
99 exposed and visualized through its superior aspect. The ulna  
100 was then stabilized by three pins attached to a frame made  
101 with external fixator pins (Hoffman 2, Stryker, Kalamazoo,  
102 USA). The radius was left free to rotate so as not to com-  
103 promise pronation–supination (Fig. 2). A 3-mm-diameter  
104 pin was inserted in the center of the radial head using a drill



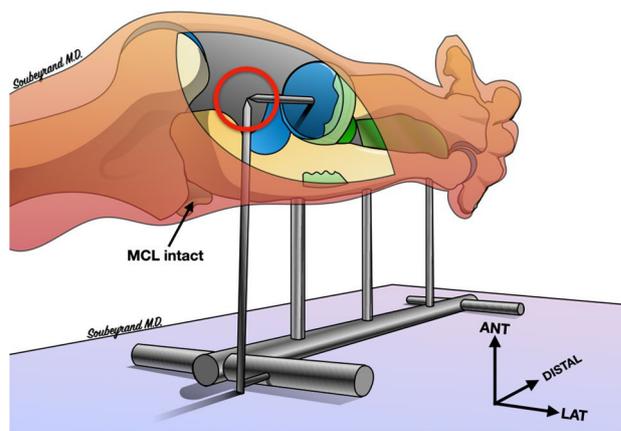
**Fig. 2** Diagram of the experimental setup. The ulna is fixed in a frame composed of bars and pins of external fixator. The radius is left free so as not to impede the rotation of the forearm

motor (Fig. 3). A second reference pin was attached to the  
frame: In the anatomical position with the reduced PRUJ,  
the tips of both pins were exactly side by side.

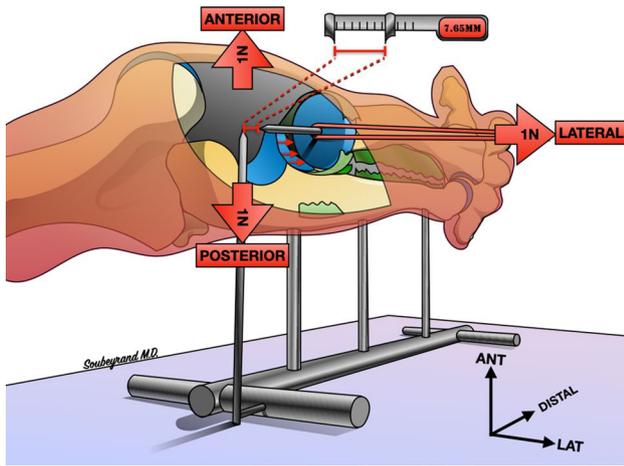
At this experimental stage, none of the ligaments stabiliz-  
ing the PRUJ were severed. A first stability assessment of the  
PRUJ was performed. To do this, the pin in the radial head  
was used as a joystick to successively apply a stress of 1 N  
(measured with a dynamometer) in the anterior, lateral and  
posterior directions. With such a stress, the 3-mm-diameter  
pin inserted in the radial head did not deform. The distance  
between the tips of both pins was measured using a digital  
caliper: It allowed to quantify the laxity in a given direc-  
tion. Each measurement was taken twice by two independent  
observers. The arithmetic mean of the four measurements  
obtained in each of the three directions (anterior, lateral  
and posterior), *i.e.*, a total of 12 measurements, was finally  
recorded and considered as an overall quantification of the  
PRUJ laxity. These measurements were taken with the fore-  
arm in maximum pronation, neutral rotation and maximum  
supination.

Then the AL of the radial head, the squared ligament of  
the elbow and the interosseous membrane of the forearm  
were severed in order to destabilize the PRUJ. These liga-  
ments are known to be stabilizers of PRUJ [4, 6, 23–25]. A  
new assessment of the PRUJ stability was performed accord-  
ing to the same protocol as described above (Fig. 4).

In a third step, we performed the ligamentoplasty that we  
designed (Fig. 5a). A 4-mm-diameter tunnel was made in the  
ulna. Its direction was antero-posterior, with an entry point  
just below the radial notch (Fig. 5b). The target exit point  
was the ulnar insertion zone of the LCUL. The palmaris  
longus (if present) and the homolateral gracilis tendon on

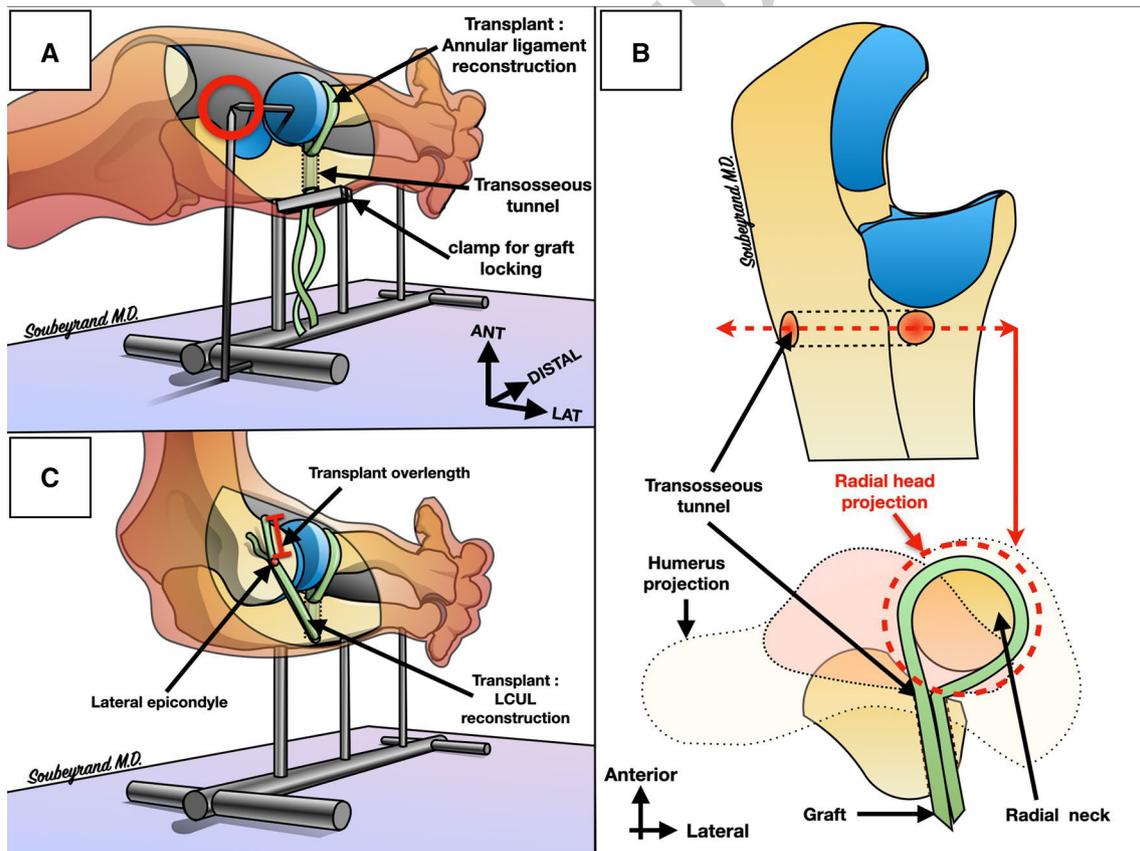


**Fig. 3** The lateral collateral ulnar ligament (LCUL) was severed as well as the anterior capsule in order to dislocate the elbow. The medial ulnar collateral ligament (MCL) was left intact. Two pins were inserted, in the radial head and attached to the experimental frame, respectively. In an anatomical position, the tips of the two pins are side by side



**Fig. 4** The laxity of the proximal radioulnar joint (PRUJ) is tested by exerting a traction of 1 N (N) in the anterior, lateral and posterior directions, respectively. Each displacement is measured using a digital caliper. In the injured configuration, the interosseous membrane, square ligament and annular ligament were severed to simulate PRUJ instability

the knee were harvested from the same body. Each tendon was used successively to perform the ligamentoplasty as follows: The tendon was folded in a loop around the neck of the radius, and then, the two free ends were passed through the ulnar tunnel. The graft was placed under tension and this tension was maintained by clamping the two strands flush with the exit point of the ulnar tunnel. A new stability assessment was then performed as described above with the palmaris longus tendon or the gracilis tendon. For each ligamentoplasty performed with either tendon, the elbow was reduced by placing the humerus back in its anatomical position in front of the ulna and radius (Fig. 5c). An attempt was then made to return the free strands of the graft to the lateral epicondyle in order to reconstruct the LCUL. The graft was considered long enough if it extended at least 1.5 cm beyond the apex of the lateral epicondyle. Indeed, we believe that this length of tendon is the minimum required to achieve a fixation on the humerus with sufficient strength to allow early rehabilitation of the elbow in the postoperative period.



**Fig. 5** Experimental protocol. **a** The stability of the proximal radioulnar joint is also tested after reconstruction of the annular ligament with the palmaris longus and with the gracilis tendon. **b** The entry point of the transosseous tunnel is located just below the radial incision of the ulna. Its direction is from front to back as shown in the

anatomical section. **c** In the final stage the elbow is reduced and the graft is redirected to the lateral epicondyle. A minimum overlength of 1.5 cm from the top of the lateral epicondyle was considered necessary to ensure proper fixation

156 In total, there were four successive configurations for  
 157 each forearm: (1) intact, (2) destabilized, (3) ligamentoplasty  
 158 with the palmaris longus (LPL) and (4) ligamentoplasty with  
 159 the gracilis (LGT).

160 **Experimental protocol to assess the anatomical risk**  
 161 **of this technique**

162 At the end of each ligamentoplasty, we performed a dissec-  
 163 tion of the ulnar nerve as well as the posterior interosse-  
 164 ous nerve. Indeed these two structures are the most at risk  
 165 of being damaged during the realization of this technique.  
 166 Their status (intact/injured) was recorded.

167 Moreover, the risk of any ligamentoplasty is to gener-  
 168 ate joint stiffness: In the case of our study, the theoretical  
 169 risk was that the ligamentoplasty would limit the range of  
 170 rotation of the forearm. We therefore measured mobility in  
 171 maximum pronation and maximum supination for the three  
 172 configurations. Each measurement was repeated twice by  
 173 two independent observers using a goniometer, and the arith-  
 174 metic mean of these four measurements was then recorded.

175 **Statistical analysis**

176 Data were analyzed using Prism software (GraphPad soft-  
 177 wares) for Mac OS. One-way ANOVA with multiple com-  
 178 parisons and post hoc analyses using the Bonferroni compar-  
 179 ison test were the primary tests, whereas paired *t*-test were

used to compare the range of motions between each experi-  
 mental configuration, using a  $p < 0.05$  significance level.  
 Throughout the text and figures, the mean value  $\pm$  SEM  
 notations are used in describing the results.

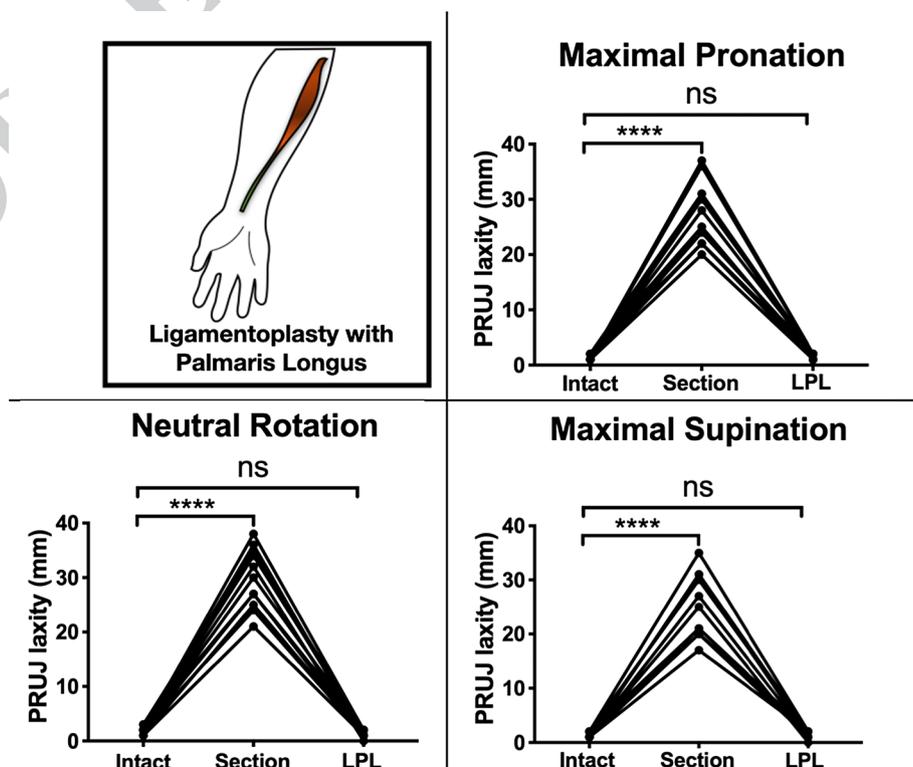
**Results**

The mean age of the specimens was 83 years (69–91). Eight  
 were females, and seven were males. Out of 15 specimens,  
 only 12 had a palmaris longus and they all had gracilis  
 tendon.

As indicated by the ANOVA, the combined sections of  
 the annular ligament, the square ligament and the interos-  
 seous membrane resulted in significant laxity in all three  
 positions of forearm rotation (maximum supination, neutral  
 rotation and maximum pronation) and in all three directions:  
 anterior (intact VS destabilized:  $p < 0.001$ ), lateral (intact  
 VS destabilized:  $p < 0.001$ ) and posterior (intact VS destabi-  
 lized:  $p < 0.001$ ). The occurrence of this laxity was observed  
 in all specimens.

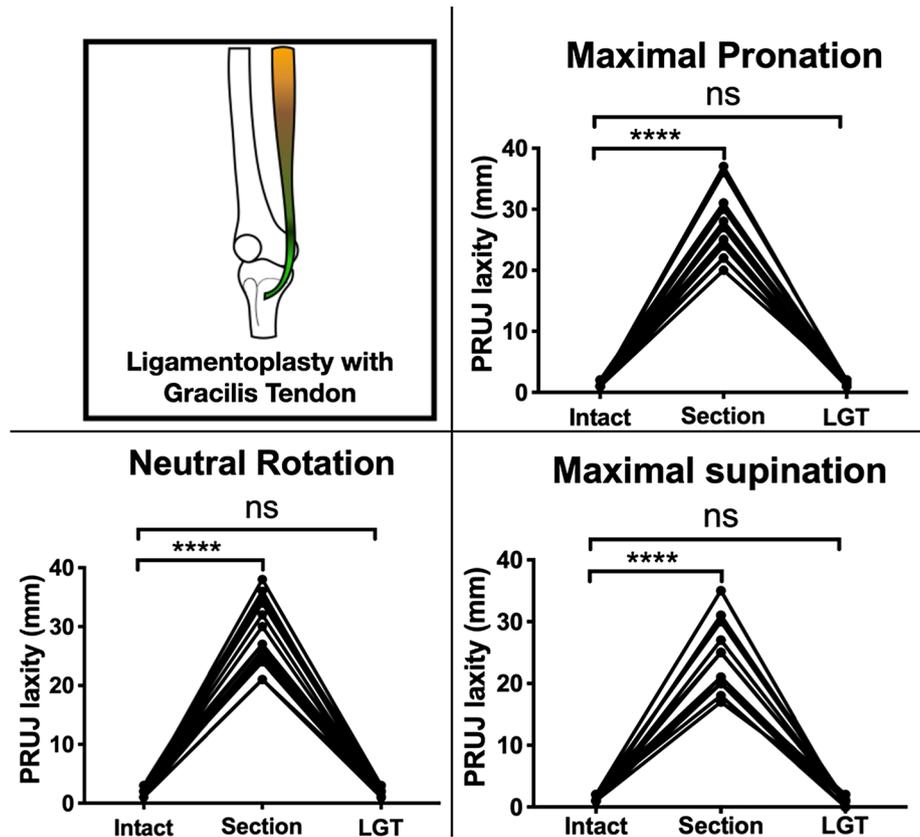
Ligamentoplasty, whether performed using the palmaris  
 longus (Fig. 6) or the gracilis tendon (Fig. 7), restored sta-  
 bility equivalent to the intact configuration, in the three  
 positions of rotation of the forearm (maximum supination,  
 neutral rotation and maximum pronation) and in the three  
 directions: anterior (intact VS LPL: nonsignificant (ns)), lat-  
 eral (intact VS LPL: ns) and posterior (intact VS LPL: ns).

**Fig. 6** Results of testing the proximal radioulnar joint (PRUJ) in the three positions of forearm rotation (maximum pronation, neutral rotation, maximum supination) and in the three configurations (intact, destabilized (section of the interosseous membrane, square ligament and annular ligament), ligamentoplasty with the gracilis tendon (LGT)). *ns* not significant. *\*\*\*\** = statistically significant



Author Proof

**Fig. 7** Results of testing the proximal radioulnar joint (PRUJ) in the three positions of forearm rotation (maximum pronation, neutral rotation, maximum supination) and in the three configurations (intact, destabilized (section of the interosseous membrane, square ligament and annular ligament), ligamentoplasty with the palmaris longus (LPL)), ligamentoplasty with the gracilis tendon



205 In the intact configuration, the average maximum supination  
206 was  $87^\circ (\pm 0.62)$ , while the average maximum pronation  
207 was  $87.4^\circ (\pm 0.49)$ . In the LGT configuration, the mean maxi-  
208 mum supination was  $87.5^\circ (\pm 0.35)$ , while the mean maxi-  
209 mum pronation was  $87^\circ (\pm 0.53)$ . In the LPL configuration,  
210 the mean maximum supination was  $87.5^\circ (\pm 0.43)$ , while the  
211 mean maximum pronation was  $87.7^\circ (\pm 0.25)$ . The paired  
212 *t*-test showed no significant difference between the intact  
213 configuration and the LGT and LPL groups, respectively.

214 The dissections performed after ligamentoplasty revealed  
215 neither ulnar nerve damage nor damage to the posterior  
216 interosseous nerve.

217 Finally, in all cases where the ligamentoplasty was per-  
218 formed with the gracilis tendon, there was sufficient length  
219 to achieve fixation of the graft on the lateral epicondyle  
220 (associated reconstruction of the LCUL). This was only pos-  
221 sible in 1 out of 15 cases when we used the palmaris longus.

## 222 Discussion

223 During this experimental work, we showed that the liga-  
224 mentoplasty we designed to simultaneously reconstruct  
225 the annular ligament and the LCUL made it possible to  
226 restore normal stability of the radial head. This was done  
227 without compromising the range of rotation of the forearm,

228 whether using the palmaris longus or the gracilis tendon. 228  
229 We confirmed the fact that the palmaris longus was not 229  
230 constant, thus limiting its use. The ligamentoplasty tech- 230  
231 nique appeared to be anatomically safe for the ulnar nerve 231  
232 and the posterior interosseous nerve. Finally, concomitant 232  
233 reconstruction of the LCUL was possible in all cases with 233  
234 the gracilis tendon and in only one case with the palmaris 234  
235 longus. 235

236 The annular ligament is the primary stabilizer of the 236  
237 PRUJ [26, 27], while the square ligament and interosseous 237  
238 membrane are secondary stabilizers [5, 7]. In case of injury 238  
239 to the annular ligament of the radial head and the interosse- 239  
240 ous membrane, the proximal radioulnar joint (PRUJ) may be 240  
241 dislocated [5, 6] as is the case with an Essex-Lopresti injury 241  
242 [7, 8], a crisscross injury [9], a Monteggia lesion [6–9] or 242  
243 an improper repair of the annular ligament after a surgi- 243  
244 cal approach of the radial head. In case of acute Monteggia 244  
245 lesion, the PRUJ automatically relocates as the ulnar frac- 245  
246 ture is reduced. Apart from this rather favorable situation, 246  
247 PRUJ instability can sometimes persist. This instability can 247  
248 be of variable intensity, ranging from episodes of dynamic 248  
249 subluxation to complete and permanent dislocation of the 249  
250 radial head. Although rare, this condition is really challeng- 250  
251 ing, especially when the lesion is in chronic phase. In case of 251  
252 chronic PRUJ instability, some authors proposed stabiliza- 252  
253 tions by temporary radiocapitellar pinning, but with mixed 253

254 results [28–31]. For chronic neglected Monteggia lesions, 305  
255 it has been proposed to perform bending/lengthening osteo- 306  
256 tomies of the ulna and/or shortening/rotation osteotomies 307  
257 of the radius with specific complications of the osteotomies 308  
258 [16, 17, 32–34]. Other authors have proposed reconstruc- 309  
259 tion of the annular ligament by using various grafts such as 310  
260 a bundle of the triceps brachii tendon as described by Bell 311  
261 Tawse [14, 15, 35, 36], a portion of the antibrachial fascia 312  
262 [14], the palmaris longus [37] or an allograft [38]. Recon- 313  
263 struction of the quadratus ligament was also proposed by 314  
264 using the extensor carpi radialis longus tendon [19]. How- 315  
265 ever, this technique involves drilling a tunnel in the radius 316  
266 with an increased theoretical risk of radius fracture and it 317  
267 mechanically limits the rotation of the radius. In most of 318  
268 these techniques, the grafts are fastened to the ulna's sur- 319  
269 face which limits the intrinsic resistance of the construct 320  
270 to maintain the radial head in proper position. Therefore, 321  
271 these techniques require a postoperative immobilization. In 322  
272 the pediatric population, which is the most concerned in the 323  
273 literature with neglected Monteggia's lesions, the potential 324  
274 for recovery of joint amplitudes is better than in the adult 325  
275 population. In adults, postoperative immobilization of the 326  
276 elbow quickly leads to stiffness of pronation-supination and flex- 327  
277 ion-extension. Another limitation of these techniques is that 328  
278 they do not stabilize the radiocapitellar joint. The ligamen- 329  
279 toplasty we have developed makes it possible to reconstruct 330  
280 the annular ligament and the LCUL ligament with a single 331  
281 graft. Therefore, it results in the stabilization of the radial 332  
282 head with respect to the ulna (PRUJ), but also with respect 333  
283 to the capitellum of the humerus (radiocapitellar joint). This 334  
284 may be useful in unusual clinical situations such as the one 335  
285 reported below where instability of the PRUJ is associated 336  
286 with lateral instability of the elbow.

### 287 **Our study has several limitations**

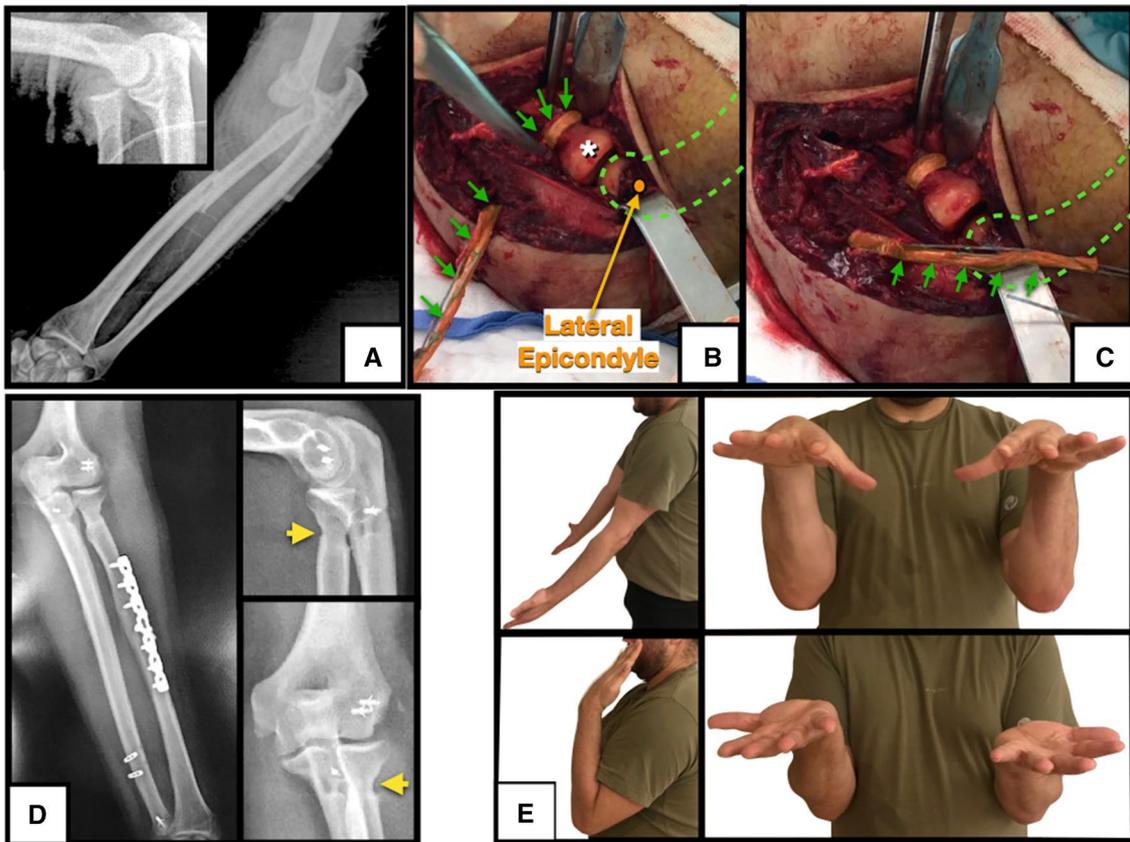
288 As with any study conducted on cadavers, the question arises 337  
289 as to what the in vivo translation will yield. For example, 338  
290 there is a theoretical risk of graft resorption or radioulnar 339  
291 synostosis that cannot be ruled out until the technique has 340  
292 been used in living patients. Of course, we have not yet been 341  
293 able to carry out a clinical series, but it just so happens that 342  
294 we have had to use this technique on a 44-year-old patient 343  
295 who fell from his height onto his left hand. He had a very 344  
296 unusual association of injury with a distal radioulnar dis- 345  
297 junction, a forearm interosseous membrane tear (diagnosed 346  
298 by ultrasound), a radial shaft fracture, a proximal radioulnar 347  
299 disjunction and a posterolateral elbow dislocation (Fig. 8). 348  
300 We reinserted the triangular fibrocartilage complex, per- 349  
301 formed an interosseous membrane ligamentoplasty with a 350  
302 semitendinosus tendon graft reinforced with two tight ropes 351  
303 to stabilize the forearm, reduced and fixed the radius frac- 352  
304 ture. We also used the ligamentoplasty we describe in this 353

305 article to stabilize the PRUJ and the elbow. The gracilis 306  
307 tendon was used, reinforced with a non-absorbable suture 308  
309 along its entire length. Fixations of the graft to the ulna and 310  
311 lateral epicondyle of the humerus were performed with G2 312  
313 anchors (Mitek<sup>®</sup>). Early rehabilitation was started, passive 314  
315 without limit and active supported until the sixth week. 316  
317 From the sixth week, the patient was allowed to resume a 318  
319 normal life. At 1 year postoperatively, the result is excellent 320  
321 with a complete absence of pain, normal preservation of the 321  
322 radius/ulna relationship and a stable elbow. The mobility in 322  
323 flexion-extension is  $-5^{\circ}/120^{\circ}$ , and in pronation-supination, 323  
324 it is  $85^{\circ}/85^{\circ}$ . On the radiographs, the radial head appears 324  
325 properly reduced in front of the ulna and the humerus. There 325  
326 is also a notch on the neck of the radius corresponding to the 326  
327 imprint of the graft, but which is of no consequence. This 327  
328 notch indirectly proves that the graft has not resorbed. An 328  
329 MRI would be the imaging procedure of choice for direct 329  
330 visualization of the graft, but the excellent clinical condition 330  
331 of the patient did not justify such an imaging procedure. The 331  
332 patient had no pain at the knee harvesting site. Although 332  
333 limited, this first clinical experience is very encouraging. 333  
334

335 Another limitation of the study is that we did not test the 336  
337 mechanical strength of the ligamentoplasty. This is essential 337  
338 to enable early rehabilitation to be envisaged, which guar- 338  
339 antees the recovery of correct joint mobility. In particular, 339  
340 the choice of graft fixation on the humerus plays an impor- 340  
341 tant role. In the clinical case reported above, we used two 341  
342 anchors, but it would also have been possible to create a 342  
343 transosseous tunnel in the lateral epicondyle. A subsequent 343  
344 biomechanical study would be necessary to clarify these 344  
345 technical points. 345

346 Finally, a limitation of this technique is the use of autolo- 346  
347 gous grafts. This study shows that the palmaris longus is 347  
348 sufficient for isolated reconstruction of the annular liga- 348  
349 ment, but that if the surgical project is to also reconstruct 349  
350 the LCUL at the same time, the use of the gracilis tendon 350  
351 is to be preferred. We chose to study the palmaris longus 351  
352 and the gracilis tendon because they are commonly used in 352  
353 ligament surgery. However, the palmaris longus is incon- 353  
354 sistent, which is a well-known fact that we have confirmed 354  
355 in our study [39]. On the other hand, the gracilis tendon is 355  
356 constant, but requires the harvesting on another limb with 356  
357 the risk of complications specific to the harvesting (pain, 357  
358 scarring problems and failure of harvesting by surgeons of 358  
359 the upper limb who are not accustomed to it). An interesting 359  
360 approach would be to use artificial ligaments composed of 360  
361 polyethylene terephthalate, for example. A specific clinical 361  
362 study would be necessary to evaluate the interest of this. 362

363 In conclusion, this ligamentoplasty technique allows 363  
364 the stabilization of the radial head. A first clinical case is 364  
365 encouraging, but a clinical study is now necessary to clarify 365  
366 the potential and limits of this ligamentoplasty. 366  
367



**Fig. 8** Illustrations of the clinical case. **a** Preoperative radiographs showing dislocation of the humero-ulnar and proximal radioulnar joints. **b** Intraoperative view after reconstruction of the annular ligament and transosseous passage of the gracilis tendon (green arrows). Discontinuous green line: humerus. **c** The gracilis tendon is then

rerouted to the lateral epicondyle. **d** Postoperative radiographs at 1 year. A notch appears on the neck of the radius (yellow arrow) corresponding to the imprint of the graft. **e** mobility of the elbow and forearm at 1 year postoperatively

358 **Author contributions** All authors made contributions to the conception  
359 and design of the study, acquisition of data, analysis and interpretation  
360 of data and drafting the article or revising it, and gave final approval  
361 of the submitted version.

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363 agencies in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

364 **Availability of data and material** Experimental data are available.

### 365 Compliance with ethical standards

366 **Conflict of interest** None of the authors have a conflict of interest to  
367 declare.

368 **Ethical approval** This study was conducted at the Paris School of Sur-  
369 gery. The ethical rules of our institution were respected.

370 **Consent to participate** In this article, we report the clinical case of a  
371 patient who has given his written consent for the use of his anonymized  
372 data for the purposes of this publication.

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