Reviewer's report

Title: A survey of abnormalities in the colon and rectum in patients presenting with haemorrhoids.

Version: 1 Date: 15 March 2010

Reviewer: Wilhelm Graf

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This is an observational study of patients undergoing colonoscopy for clinical reasons with the purpose to detect colonic abnormalities in patients with haemorrhoids. I have several questions and concerns.

1. I see no reason to exclude patients without haemorrhoids from the study, this group should be an interesting control group for comparison.

2. The method of detecting haemorrhoids is not optimal nor well described. Apparently, the main diagnostic tool is inspection, whereas it is best diagnosed with anoscopy. The procedure for diagnosing haemorrhoids should be more precise.

3. Some of the comparison the authors do are unwarranted, i.e. it is obvious that patients with associated pathology are older and that sigmoidoscopy is less effective to detect proximal pathology.

4. Ethical permission for the study is not mentioned.

5. The authors conclude that colonoscopy is not necessary for patients below the age of 50, however the number of patients in this group is too low to allow firm conclusions.

6. Patients undergoing sigmoidoscopy were included in the study which is questionable since the possibility to detect pathology is limited.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'