Reviewer's report

Title: High APACHE 2 score and long length of bowel resection impair the outcomes in patients with necrotic bowel induced hepatic portal venous gas

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Reviewer: Olivier Monneuse

Reviewer's report:

We have been asked to review the article titled ‘high APACHE 2 score and long length of bowel resection impair the outcomes in patients with necrotic bowel induced hepatic portal venous gas’.

The authors studied the risk factors of mortality in patients with hepatic portal venous gas secondary to intestinal necrosis. This is a retrospective study.

28 consecutive patients had been identified in 7 years. It is an important series of patients according to the others reported series.

We identified some points that should be taken in account in order to ameliorate the manuscript:

Major compulsory revisions:

6 patients were excluded of the series. These 6 patients were treated medically. No medical data justify this attitude among these patients. Were they excluded because of a major mesenteric infarction? Otherwise in the first paragraph of results section, the authors claim that “the 6 patients receiving medical treatment all expired within three days, indicating the necessity of surgical treatment”. No data in this paper allows such a conclusion. These 6 patients could modify the statistics in intention to treat.

Table 2 is unclear. Some patients appear several times. It seems that patients with “both small and large bowels involved” appear in other sections either in “small bowel involved” or “large bowel involved”. It would be better if the total of patients of column 1 matches to the overall number of patients.

In the last paragraph of introduction the authors claim that the “largest series contained only 7 patients [9]”. Some of the references report more than 7 patients: ref 19 (11 patients), ref 14 (15 patients, 12 bowel obstructions).

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests