Reviewer’s report

Title: Obesity is a Negative Predictor of Success after Surgery for Complex Anal Fistula

Version: 1 Date: 12 March 2011

Reviewer: Wilhelm Graf

Reviewer’s report:

Abstract: what does the author mean by “complex” anal fistula. It is better to define exactly which kind of fistulas that were included.

Introduction: sphincter reconstruction is not an integral part of advancement flap

Methods

Major compulsory revisions

Why do the author choose to use a dichotomous classification of BMI and not a continuous?

Who assessed the patients for healing? If the author did the evaluation personally there is a risk for bias.

A limitation of the study is the short follow-up, this should be recognized and discussed.

The statistical methods should be described more in detail.

The author state that:” … fistulas in which the fistula tract was located in the upper two-thirds of the external sphincter were treated by rectal advancement flap repair” What was the technique in the lower third?

Was the study approved by the IRB?

Discretionary revisisons

The word “oralisation” seems eccentric

Results:

Major compulsory revisions

The legend to Table 2 says: Fistula etiology but no such data is presented.

78% had an advancement flap repair, which procedure was used in the remaining 22%?

A greater proportion in the non obese group were previously unoperated which can affect the success rate

Which variables were included in the multivariate analysis?

Discussion

Discretionary revisions
The sentence:” Moreover, sufficient of the external wound is mandatory” is unclear.

The author claim that excision of the entire tract is mandatory – any evidence for this statement?

Many statements are repeated and the discussion section could be shortened by removing unnecessary repetitions.

NB Major compulsory revisions are written in bold text. Minor Essential Revisions are presented in Italic style. Discretionary Revisions are in normal text.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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'