Reviewer's report

Title: Oxytocin and cholecystokinin secretion in women with colectomy.

Version: 1 Date: 9 July 2004

Reviewer: Ad A Masclee

Reviewer's report:

General
Based on a previous intriguing finding the authors have studied oxytocin plasma concentrations in response to CCK infusion in colectomised and in healthy women. Basal and CCK stimulated plasma oxytocin levels were not different among the two groups (in contrast to the hypothesis). Plasma CCK levels after bolus infusion were higher in colectomised subjects, which the authors interpret as a reduced metabolic clearance of CCK. The research question posed by the authors is new and relevant. The methods (hormone analyses) are well described and validated.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

My major concern relates to the CCK bolus infusion and plasma CCK levels. The observed differences in plasma CCK levels may result from factors not mentioned or discussed by the authors: 1) why was CCK administered as bolus instead of continuous infusion? Bolus infusion leads to high, unphysiological plasma (tissue) levels. 2) plasma CCK levels in the early phase after CCK infusion are lacking, thus no data are available for CCK kinetics. 3) the stimulus (CCK) was not standardised, thus identical plasma CCK levels would have resulted perhaps in lower oxytocin levels in the patients?

No evidence is provided that hyperCCKemia results from delayed CCK clearance!

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Figure 1 and 3 could be replaced by a table

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

None