Reviewer’s report

Title: Nationwide Epidemiological Study of Severe Gallstone Disease in Taiwan

Version: 1 Date: 23 March 2009

Reviewer: Wolfgang Kratzer

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The issue on the incidence of biliary complications in symptomatic cholecystolithiasis addressed by Huang et al. is of high importance in today’s health care policy, primarily in regards to increasing hypercaloric nutrition and obesity.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The data analysis conducted by the authors and the management of data are adequate and described in detail.

3. Are the data sound?
The data are sound.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
The study presented by the authors complies with international standards and the data evaluation is well comprehensible.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
The conclusions drawn by the authors are consistent with the results described and show an increase of complicated gall stone diseases particularly in the younger age groups.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
The limitations addressed by the authors themselves describe the problems of the study satisfactorily and explicitly point out the questions that could not be answered, such as the localisation and the composition of the gall stones.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
The title of the study as well as the abstract reflect the most important aspects that were obtained during the study.

9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes

Please make your review as constructive and detailed as possible in your
comments so that authors have the opportunity to overcome any serious deficiencies that you find and please also divide your comments into the following categories:

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

After minor but necessary revisions have been made the study can be accepted for publication.

In detail the following revisions should be made:

Fig.3 The caption must be altered and the results for both men and women should be easily recognizable.

Discussion:
The first paragraph of the discussion should be deleted as it once again includes a repetition of the most important results.

**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