Reviewer’s report

Title: Ten-year audit of Lichtenstein hernioplasty under local anaesthesia performed by surgical residents

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Reviewer: Karsten Junge

Reviewer’s report:

In this manuscript the authors analyzed the “Ten-year audit of Lichtenstein hernioplasty under local anaesthesia performed by surgical residents”. 281 patients were operated during 1996-2000 either by one senior consultant (n=141) or by 12 surgical trainees (n=140). After 10 years, 247 (88 %) patients were available for the long-term assessment. They found one month postoperatively, the rate of wound infections (consultant 1.1 %, residents 0.7 %) and hematomas (consultant 1.1 %, residents 3.0 %) were low and not related to surgeon’s training level (ns). Only 6 (2.1 %) clinically evident recurrences were found after 10 years: two after specialist repair and four after trainee repair (ns). Although one third of the patients reported some discomfort after 3 and 10 years, 93-95 % of the patients were very satisfied with the operation, with no statistical difference between the surgeons. The authors conclude that an ambulatory open mesh repair under local anaesthesia is a safe operation and the long-term results are acceptable among the patients operated by surgical trainees.

Overall the authors present interesting long term results following Lichtenstein hernioplasty performed by surgical residents. Just one remark: Due to the fact that nerve identification shows a negative relation to chronic postoperative pain it would be interesting to know if there is a relation within this study as it is stated that “The inguinal nerves were tried to identify and save if possible.”

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.