Reviewer's report

Title: Early rectal stenosis following stapled rectal mucosectomy for hemorrhoids

Version: Date: 27 January 2004

Reviewer: David M Hemingway

Reviewer's report:

General
1) the paper is of interest since it specifically discusses a potential complication of a new technique and deserves publication subject to a few modifications.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1) The abstract discusses both anal and rectal stenosis, but anal stenosis is not discussed further in the text. since an anal stenosis is likely to be related to a technical error (as the pursestring should be placed in the rectum), the authors should either remove the reference to anal stenosis or acknowledge the likely hood of technical factors causing this complication.
2) abstact and results and discussion suggest that a p value of 0.11 suggests a trend towards statistical significance. I believe it simply suggests that there was no significant difference and the reference to a "trend " should be deleted.
2) is the list of references relating to stenosis after stapled mucosectomy meant to be a snapshot or a complete search?. Rowsell et al, Lancet 2000;356:2188 specifically mentions stenosis but is not included in the list of references.

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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)
1)Methods . replace "monofil" with monofilament.

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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 of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I have published the 1st randomised trial of the technique (lancet 2000;355:779-781). The instruments used in this trial were donated by ethicon endosurgery.