Reviewer’s report

Title: Risk factors for early recurrence after inguinal hernia repair

Version: 1 Date: 9 August 2009

Reviewer: Nicola Zampieri

Reviewer’s report:

the study is interesting but it requires some changes:

Major revisions:
1) study population and the study group is small in number (only 35% of hernia)
2) gender is important but you don’t have enough females to exclude the potential risk factor. please indicate during the text the number and gender of patients.
3) Some conclusions are not based on study results

Minor Essential Revisions

ABSTRACT
1) Methods: we performed an observational study for 74 patients.
2) conclusion: we suggest that genetic studies should be performed in recurrent hernia patients where the impact of gender on disease manifestation can be excluded. Why? Is gender a risk factor for recurrent hernia? do you have data for females?

Background

line 1: H recurr is a common surgical problem...
"Common" is not correct: I suggest to change with relative rare or other.
line 3: however the pathobiological mechanism...
What is it? what do you mean?
lines 4 to 7: this sentence is not clear to the reader. what do you mean with " in centres and by experienced surgeons the risk for hernia recurrence increases from repair to repair..."?
lines 12-14: is this statement correct for all hernias at any age?
lines 19-21: what is it Col3A1? I know it but not the reader. Nothern blot...etc.. where? in which disease?
lines 22-23: put a reference
lines 28-30: could the identification of biological subgroup be important to avoid the hernia recurrence?
Materials and Methods

line 1: re-recurrent...what about these patients?
line 1: please put the study range in correct manner. i.e. between Gennuary 1992 and ...
line 3: 75 patients.... 74 or 75?
the paragraph: 75 of these patients...were therefore excluded should be put in the results section.
selection of study group is not clear: inclusion criteria? age range?

Results

Please put the number of male and female distribution before selection (i.e. 214 patients)
please indicate the age range
214 patients - 17 (single incisional hernia) = 197 patients
75 or 74 patients of 197 is 38%. this percentage is very small!
this data should be correlated with the age range of patients and the age range of patients with only one recurrence.
the data analysis could be done using the single hernia recurrence group as control group. selection of study population is very important!
what about the surgical findings of recurrent hernias?
pag 5 line line: please put the p value during text!
lines 3-5: I suggest to change the paragraph: A significant correlation.....free interval; the older the patients were at onset, the earlier they had a hernia recurrence. (Pearson's....)
Older and not Olderr (line 4)
lines 8-9: put p value
lines 10-12: do you have any idea about this data? why? please clarify or put a reference.

Discussion

line 3-4: in contrast to primary...for recurrent hernia. where? in this study?
please clarify or put a reference.
line 6: by an significantly ...is not correct. "a " significantly...
lines 11-15: this paragraph is confusing. what is it >5 ?? >50???
coronary disease: is predictive factor for recurrence or is it only related to age?
pag 6 line 7-9: during text you suggest that recurrence is not correlated with surgical experience or technique, but only with some risk factors...and now you say that the wound healing is enough to avoid recurrence!
what about the incisional hernia?
last paragraphs of the discussion are not clear and are not related to the
manuscript.
how can you improve wound healing?
these conclusions are not the abstract conclusions, but are based on study
results!
tables:
1- this table is not clear in the first two lines
2- what about 63+ and -12....???
3: also for this table, what do you mean with + and -...?
4: this table could be omitted
figure 1: graph: 2,3,4..are the number of recurrence? female had 2 and 3
recurrence more than male! that probably are the most frequent...

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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'