Reviewer’s report

Title: Kyphectomy for severe kyphosis with pyogenic spondylitis associated with myelomeningocele: a case report

Version: 1 Date: 31 January 2011

Reviewer: Sean Comstock

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Eight authors seem like a lot for a case report. Current publication guidelines (see CORR among others) require authors to be involved in three aspects of: conception and design, data acquisition, analysis, writing, and editing to be considered an author. By their report KY KW and MM seem to have fulfilled these criteria.

2. Several references to “a rare case” but no comment on the incidence in the literature, discussion focuses on the use of pedicle screws which is well described. I would suggest a more complete literature review and include the absence of reports on adult kyphectomy. This way one could increase the impact of the article, and further comment that while this is well described in the pediatric population, there are only xx cases in adults. Further, the population of adult patients with myelomeningocele related kyphosis (the population at risk) needs to be defined to determine the rarity of this condition.

3. One could focus on the new complication, and even comment on the necessity or consequences of treating the primary ulcer. This patient did not have systemic sepsis. I would suspect that she would have gladly had an ulcer on her back rather than one on her perineum that required two flaps.

4. The comments on sagittal imbalance deserve more explanation. I think the goal of restoring sagittal balance in a myelomeningocele patient is to allow them freedom to sit unsupported by their arms, and relieve pressure on their abdominal contents. It would be nice to see upright lateral radiographs of her spine before and after. There is only a spot lateral preop. That way the comments on sagittal balance would carry more weight, perhaps in conjunction with a post-op clinical photo, and some comment on function.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Case presentation first paragraph hydrocephalia? Hydrocephaly, or hydrocephalus.

2. Second paragraph: cultures were positive for, or cultures grew MRSA

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.