Reviewer's report

Title: Trans-visceral migration of retained surgical gauze as cause of intestinal obstruction: a case report.

Version: 4 Date: 24 October 2007

Reviewer: Geert van der Heijden

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: Unexpected or unusual presentations of a disease

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: Yes

Comments to authors:

This case meets two of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal
- Unexpected or unusual presentations of a disease
- Findings that shed new light on an adverse effect

The problem of retained gauze is too much put in the context of medico-legal implications of medical error and its consequences. First of all retained gauze is a problem in terms of lack of quality. Discussion on lack of quality should also be included in this case report. The impact of the problem of retained gauze counts is now spread throughout the discussion: ....76% of surgical abdominal interventions ....; ...1/1000 procedures on average; removal seems to lead to a 10% mortality risk if ... etc. Could this be condensed?

- Needs some language corrections before being published
  e.g. second paragraph of discussion ".... a falsly correct gauze count...." but there are more.

What next?: Accept after minor revisions
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published