Author's response to reviews

Title: The song remains the same although the instruments are changing: Complications following selective non-operative management of blunt spleen trauma: A retrospective review of patients at a level I trauma centre from 1996 to 2007

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The song remains the same although the instruments are changing: Complications following selective non-operative management of blunt spleen trauma: A retrospective review of patients at a level I trauma centre from 1996 to 2007

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Dear Annette Luckmann

Thank you for the opportunity again to respond to the reviewers final suggestions. We continue to appreciate all the help they have provided in the previous extensive revision of the manuscript.

We are responding to the reviewer’s final comments as detailed below;

Reviewer 1) Julie Mayglothing

Dr Mayglothing had only the single Minor Essential Revisions:

“The authors stated that all patients get repeated imaging. Do they image all splenic injuries? Grade 1? Grade 2? - just a clarification or statement to that fact would be helpful.”

To answer Dr Mayglothing’s question; yes, our current protocol does recommend obtaining a repeat CT scan for all splenic injuries, and it is justified by previous reports that noted cases of delayed presentation of splenic artery pseudoaneurysms even in Grade I and II splenic injuries(1). Our protocol does allow that clinical judgment permits
an dedicated splenic ultrasound looking for pseudoaneurysms to be utilized in young patients with Grade I or II splenic injuries

(http://www.traumacanada.ca/media/blunt_spleen/splenic_inj_protocol.pdf.)

We have clarified this in the manuscript, which is what we hope Dr Mayglothing was asking us to do.

Thus the pertinent section on page 18 has been re-written as;

In our institution we now recommend that repeat CT imaging is obtained within 72 hours in all grades of splenic injury, based on reports documenting the detection of splenic artery pseudoaneurysms even in low Grade injuries. Our protocol also permits the use of dedicated ultrasound exams in selected young patients Grade I and II injuries instead of CT scan based on clinician judgment.

Reviewer 2 Neil Parry

We noted Dr Parry had no further questions and are pleased to have satisfied his previous ones.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Kirkpatrick
AK/ra