Reviewer’s report

Title: Treatment of thulium laser for upper tract urothelial carcinoma via ureteroscopy: a retrospective monocentric study

Version: 0 Date: 04 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Demetrius H Bagley

Reviewer's report:

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This another paper which adds to the literature supporting the selective use of endoscopic treatment of upper tract neoplasms.

There are several points which must be clarified before the paper is suitable for publication.

Abstract

The comparison of the two groups of patients must be clarified in the last three sentences of methods. It is clear in the paper itself.

Background

Approaches to the upper urinary tract tumors is not limited to the thulium laser. Other instruments have been used before the thulium laser was available. These must be discussed preferably in discussion rather than in background.

In the last sentence you state "32 cases of ureteral carcinoma treated by…". Under results it is stated that four were in the renal pelvis and 28 in the ureter. This should be consistent.
Methods

Spelling. Rigid not vigid

Was a "D-J" stent used or a double pigtail??

Why was the stent left for three months. This is considerably longer than in any other series.

Results

Were the strictures treated by dilation or the other techniques later listed in the discussion? Again these should be consistent.

Discussion

In the comment on hemodialysis, why was the mean age of 61 noted. It should be 69, the same as this series or closer to the age of the patients if available. This also should be referenced.

The next sentence comments on "the rapid development of new technologies". Here you have cited only the thulium laser. The other techniques for endoscopic tumor treatment have been used much earlier and more extensively and should be considered. These include mechanical removal, electrosurgical and Neodymium or Holmium lasers. The thulium was not the only technique available.

What is a "guiding zebra".

"The tumor recurrence rates after endoscopic resection of UTUC have been studied by several authors". A table of the results would put your recurrence rate in perspective.

"Moreover, it can obtain biopsy specimens…".Here you state that stage can be determined. All authors have noted that it is nearly impossible to determine the stage ureteroscopically.

Under limitations, it should be stated that the visual determination of recurrence is a severe limitation.
Overall

The many errors in spelling and English grammar should be corrected.

The reference form it should be consistent. In some references three of four authors are noted In some all four are noted and sometimes 3 et al.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
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I am able to assess the statistics

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