Reviewer’s report

Title: Comparison of the efficacy and safety of URSL, RPLU, and MPCNL for treatment of large upper impacted ureteral stones: A Randomized Controlled Trial

Version: 0 Date: 17 Jan 2017

Reviewer: R. Lombardo

Reviewer’s report:

The present manuscript has the aim of comparing three different surgical procedures in patients with large upper impacted ureteral stones. The trial is interesting and not present in the actual litterature. It is a Randomised Clinical Trial.

The Title is informative and clearly states the aim of the study and the type of study.

Abstract: The abstract should state the main objective of the study in the backround. In the methods it should be stated that the patients were allocated with a 1:1:1 ratio. Trial registration is missing.

Backround:

In this section the authors should explain the rational of the study. It is not clear why making a three way comparaison? The authors should better describe the need of this RCT. They should mainly concentrate on the results of the trials comparing these techniques and systematic reviews.

Methods:

I have some concerns regarding the methodology of the study. Number of men and women should be in the results section. Line 112 the last phrase of the paragraph is not needed. Including patients with radiolucent stones may be a bias. I have some concern regarding the use of a KUB to define stone free patients, why was 4 mm used as a cut off? How was the patient reevaluated at 6-12 months? Some information are missing:

- Who performed the procedures.
- Describe when and how stents and tubes were removed.
- Sample size calculation and Power analysis of the study is missing.
- Blinding data is missing? Radiologist, operator doing the follow up visit?
Give the definition of Stone Free rate only success rate has been defined.

Results

Results are well written and tables are clear. These are my concerns:

- In table 2 MPCNL group how come 48/50 are stone free but 3/50 had auxiliary ESWL?
- Data on number of patients followed at 6 and 12 months should be included as well as the data obtained from these patients as already mentioned earlier.

Discussion

The authors describe each single procedure with pro and cons. In this section it would be useful to describe the different comparisons present in the literature. A recent metaanalysis has been published by Torricelli et al and should be included in the discussion. In the limitation part I would add the lack of a postoperative CT.

Summary:

The authors have the merit of describing three different procedures for the treatment of proximal ureteral stones. The rational of the study should be better describe in the introduction and discussed in the discussion section. I recommend the authors to follow the consort guidelines and checklist. However it is of note that no other RCT is available with this comparison.

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.

No

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?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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