

Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade A (Excellent)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: An interesting study about evaluate the clinical efficacy and safety of this modified percutaneous transhepatic papillary balloon dilation procedure. It was feasible and safe with a small number of patients with hepatolithiasis and may be a treatment option in patients with severe comorbidities or in patients in which endoscopic procedure was not successful. The results were well discussed, but the references should be updated with latest ones.

Response: Agreed. The references 4, 5, 10, 13 and 19 have been updated.

Reviewer #2:

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: The manuscript is very well written. It's a retrospective study which analyzed the data of 21 consecutive patients who underwent modified percutaneous transhepatic papillary balloon dilation with hepatolithiasis. It provided a path with compliance and only requiring intravenous anesthesia, should be considered as a treatment option, especially when endoscopic procedure was not successful.

Comments: 1. Text: The format of references cited in the article did not fit the requirement of the journal.

Response: Agreed. The format of references has been revised according to the journal's requirement, which are cited by Arabic numerals in square brackets and superscripted in the text.

2. The methods are described in detail. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are clear.

3. Results are very interesting. The data in tables are excellent.

4. References. The references should be revised according to the format.

Response: Agreed. The format of references has been revised according to the journal's requirement.

Reviewer #3:

Scientific Quality: Grade A (Excellent)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: This study of modified percutaneous transhepatic papillary balloon dilation for patients with refractory hepatolithiasis is very interesting. As one of the most complex cholelithiasis, the treatment is complicated and difficult requiring a team including interventional radiologist, gastroenterologist and surgeons, and has been improved due to advanced technologies. The combined approach is percutaneous, endoscopic and surgical. For certain group of elderly patients with CBD stones with previous gastrointestinal surgery, gastrointestinal anatomical abnormalities, esophageal and gastric varices, severe cardiac or pulmonary comorbidities, endoscopic procedures or surgery may be difficult

to perform, and percutaneous transhepatic papillary balloon dilation could be an alternative. In this study, the author evaluated the clinical efficacy and safety of modified percutaneous transhepatic papillary balloon dilation for the removal of intrahepatic bile duct stones in patients with severe comorbidities. The manuscript is very well designed. Although the sample size is not so large, the results are interesting and important. Minor comments:

1. The manuscript required a minor revision, both for the language and the format. Authors should re-proof the manuscript before final publication.

Response: Agreed. Both of the language and format have been revised.

2. The follow up data is good; however, are there any data for 36 months and or 48 months? If the authors can collect and discuss those data, it will be more interesting.

Response: Thanks for your suggestion. These data has been collected and are under analyzation now, which will be discussed in our next publication.

4. Discussion is reasonable, the results were well discussed.

5. Tables required a minor editing.

Response: Agreed. Tables have been revised according to the journal's requirement.

Reviewer #4:

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: This study is very interesting. Some patients with hepatolithiasis cannot tolerate surgery due to severe cardiac or pulmonary comorbidities, or cannot be endoscopically treated because of an altered gastrointestinal anatomy. So, the author proposed a modified percutaneous transhepatic papillary balloon dilation procedure. The figures and tables help the readers to make a more understanding of the study. The whole manuscript is well drafted; however, some concerns have been noted including:

1. Some minor language polishing should be corrected.

Response: Agreed. The whole manuscript has been checked and corrected.

2. Units of time should be mo, wk, and d instead of month, week, and day.

Response: Agreed. It has been revised.

3. The format of references should be modified.

Agreed. The format of references has been revised according to the journal's requirement.