

Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS

November 28, 2014



Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 14522-review.doc).

Title: Operative management of acute diverticulitis in immunosuppressed compared to immunocompetent patients: a systematic review

Author: Ahmed Al-Khamis, MD, MSc, Jad Abou Khalil MD CM, MSc, Nazi Torabi, Marie Demian MSc, Abbas, Kezouh, PhD, Philip H. Gordon, MD, FRCSC, FACS, Marylise Boutros MD, FRCSC

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 14522

Thank you for your kind consideration and review of our manuscript. The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers (see itemized list below). In the attached manuscript, we have indicated (yellow highlights) all changes as requested.

Responses to Reviewer 00505440

Very nice systematic review worthy of publication. Thank you for your review and comments.

Major comment 1) What is the authors' rationale for including patients with extra-colonic concurrent neoplasia as IMS? This needs to be elaborated in the methods section. Thank you for this point. We corrected our inclusion criteria to read as follows: "...was receiving chemotherapy for a concurrent extracolonic malignant neoplasm." (p. 6 in the Methods section). This was the intended meaning of this phrase. We also corrected the definitions in table 3.

Major comment 2) The Tables need to be redone – please see the comments below.

The tables were redone and sent in both word and pdf to preserve format.

Minor comment 1) Background, 3rd last line. Please clarify that the reference 8 mainly involved patients on steroids as the statement made dilutes the novelty of the authors' current review.

Indeed, Hwang et al. set out to accomplish the same inclusion criteria as we did, however ultimately they mainly included patients with chronic corticosteroid use or a kidney transplant. We thus modified our statement as follows: "One qualitative systematic review [8] reported high morbidity and mortality in kidney transplant recipients and patients on chronic corticosteroid therapy with acute diverticulitis." (p. 4 in the Background section) Furthermore, we emphasized that their review

was only a qualitative review.

Minor comment 2) 11. Non operative management, line 1 – please correct was to ‘were’

“Was” was corrected to “were” as follows: “Though the inclusion criteria for this systematic review were patients who underwent an operation for acute diverticulitis, few of the included studies also commented on non-operative management.”

Minor comment 3) Once the authors use an abbreviation, they should maintain this format in the rest of the manuscript. Eg limitations of the study, line 1 - the complete word immunocompromised. Instead the authors could have used IMS

We edited the manuscript so that we consistently use the same abbreviation for each word, after initially mentioning the full word and its abbreviation. We have corrected this by using the abbreviation “IMS” on p. 19 and p. 25.

Minor comment 4) Please number the pages as it makes indicating the locations of corrections easier for the reviewers

We have numbered the pages.

Minor comment 5) Figure 1 – the formatting has been lost. Please check

We apologize for the formatting issues. We have reformatted the figure and we have included it both as a word document and a pdf.

Minor comment 6) All the tables need to be formatted. Non standard abbreviations such as ‘w’ should be removed

All non-standard abbreviations were replaced as follows:

All “w” was changed to “with” in table 5 and its legend

In table 6 the abbreviations UTI and DVT were clarified in the legend.

All tables were reformatted

Minor comment 7) Please provide the full forms of all abbreviations used. Eg in the tables, UTI, DVT, SD, etc have not been elaborated

A legend with full names for all abbreviations was added to table 2, 4, 5, and 6.

Minor comment 8) It would be better for the reader if the authors inserted the reference number beside the author name for every entry in the tables

We inserted the reference beside the author name in each table

Minor comment 9) In Table 2 – the number 9 at the end of the column on types of studies makes no sense. In Table 2, the number “9” was deleted.

Responses to Reviewer 00057983

Comment 1) This manuscript seems to include the largest series of the related topic.

Comment 2) The authors review several large studies and make a meta-analysis of this topic

in several aspects, including demographic data, clinical presentation, indication and choice of operation, post-operative morbidity and mortality, length of hospital stay, long-term outcome and non-operative management. The analysis is detailed. Despite most results are as our expectation, the results seem reliable.

Comment 3) About the limitations of this study, I think it is inevitable and acceptable.

Thank you for your review and comments.

In addition please find below our responses to the comments that were tracked within the manuscript:

- A biostatistics statement has been added in to the manuscript under Data Extraction and Management stating “Weighted means were performed for the variables that had all necessary values. The statistical methods of this study were reviewed by Dr. Abbas Kezouh from the Jewish General Hospital Lady Davis Institute in the Department of statistics and epidemiology.
- A signed biostatistics certificate in PDF format has been provided.
- Dr. Abbas Kezouh has been added as co-author.
- A conflict of interest statement has been added to the manuscript.
- A data sharing statement has been added in to the manuscript as “Review protocol and dataset available from the corresponding author at mboutros@jgh.mcgill.ca. Consent was not required nor obtained but the presented data are anonymized and risk of identification is low.”
- A signed data sharing statement in PDF format has been provided.
- Postal code has been added.
- Author contributions have been added to the manuscript.
- Open access statement has been added to the manuscript.
- +1 has been added to phone number and fax under correspondence.
- We changed our Background heading to Introduction.
- Our format for citation has been changed.
- We changed our heading formats for Inclusion Criteria and Type of Studies.
- The correct location for figure 1 has been indicated as well as an explanation to it under the Results section under the Characteristics of included studies.
- All PMID’s have been indicated for all references.
- All DOI’s have been indicated for those references that had them available.

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely,

Marylise Boutros, M.D., FRCSC