

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Orthopedics

Manuscript NO: 49252

Title: Epidemiology of syndactyly in New York State

Reviewer's code: 01221812

Reviewer's country: Pakistan

Science editor: Jin-Zhou Tang

Reviewer accepted review: 2019-07-02 05:19

Reviewer performed review: 2019-07-14 13:00

Review time: 12 Days and 7 Hours

| SCIENTIFIC QUALITY | LANGUAGE QUALITY | CONCLUSION | PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS |
|--|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Accept | Peer-Review: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language | (High priority) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good | polishing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept | <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of | (General priority) | Peer-reviewer's expertise on the |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not | language polishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision | topic of the manuscript: |
| publish | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection | <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection | <input type="checkbox"/> General |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> No expertise |
| | | | Conflicts-of-Interest: |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

No. 49252-Manuscript Epidemiology and Surgical Management of Syndactyly in New York State In this study, Swarup et al. aimed to describe the incidence and surgical management of patients with syndactyly using a U.S. population-based database. The authors carried out a retrospective study using the New York State Statewide Planning



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and Research Cooperative System (SPARCS). They observed that there were 3417 cases of syndactyly between 1997 and 2014 in New York State. The mean annual incidence was calculated to be 0.081% or 8 cases per 10,000 live births. In total, 203 patients underwent surgical management in New York State and 82% of patients were under the age of two at the time of surgery. Most patients from New York State received surgical care elsewhere. The authors conclude that there may be several barriers to care including the availability of specialized hand surgeons, access to teaching hospitals, patient gender, socioeconomic background, and insurance status. This is an interesting study, however, there are several issues with the data presentation. The manuscript therefore, would benefit from the following changes/amendments: 1. The authors comments on the document need to be omitted. 2. It is not clear how many patients had hand syndactyly or foot syndactyly or both. 3. It would be pertinent to know, whether the patients with hand or foot syndactyly have equal tendencies of undergoing surgical corrections? 4. Discussion: first paragraph is repetitive and may be omitted. 5. It is not clear how many of the syndactyly cases were associated with symptoms of other organ-systems. 6. The authors state, "We used Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes and ICD-9 procedure codes to identify surgical procedures, and we were particularly interested in procedures relating to syndactyly (ICD 9: 86.85, CPT: 26560, 26561, 26562, 28280, 28345)". However, no data is presented with respect to surgical procedures performed. 7. In the Abstract, the authors state, "Approximately 72% of surgeries were performed at teaching hospitals, and 54% of procedures were performed by orthopaedic surgeons". However, no data regarding this statement is give in the main text. 8. Fig. 2. It would be worthwhile to tag the data collection points on the map.

INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

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PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Orthopedics

Manuscript NO: 49252

Title: Epidemiology of syndactyly in New York State

Reviewer's code: 02844631

Reviewer's country: Greece

Science editor: Jin-Zhou Tang

Reviewer accepted review: 2019-07-01 10:16

Reviewer performed review: 2019-07-20 18:11

Review time: 19 Days and 7 Hours

| SCIENTIFIC QUALITY | LANGUAGE QUALITY | CONCLUSION | PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS |
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| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

It is a well-written retrospective, epidemiologic study about syndactyly and the factors that affect the patient care management in New York State. One minor problem of this manuscript is that its title and 'aim of the study' do not clearly fit to the results and conclusion. This is an epidemiologic study about the incidence of syndactyly in a specific

population and period. In addition, it focuses on the factors that have an impact on the care management, such as socioeconomic factors, expert hand surgeons' availability etc, but it is not a study about the surgical management of syndactyly. The authors should make minor revisions, change the title and the aim of the manuscript, so that it conforms to the study and its results. Specific Comments: Title: Please change the title as following: "Epidemiology of Syndactyly in New York State" Abstract: The 'aim' should be revised and changes according to the title of the manuscript should be applied. The sentence 'surgical management' should be omitted. At line 65 the authors probably mean '8 per 10,000 live births' instead of '8 per 100,000 live births'. Introduction: The authors state clearly the aim of their study: 'In this study, we use a state database.....affects operative management. (lines 108-111), which is not to present the surgical management of syndactyly, but the percentage of patients undergoing surgery, the timing of surgery and other factors. Material-Methods: Please mention the types of procedures related to syndactyly and to the different ICD 9 codes and CPTs (86.85, CPT: 26560, 26561, 26562, 28280, 28345). Results: Please provide the numbers of the different types of procedures according to the CPTs and also please mention how many patients received a single or multiple procedures during the same surgery. Discussion: It describes the strengths and weaknesses of the study and includes comparison to other studies on the topic. However, the very small percentage (5%) of patients undergoing surgery in NY State is not underlined.

INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

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