

Responses to reviewers

Reviewer 1:

- 1) The conclusion cannot be the same as the core tip. You should modify the conclusions of your paper to make it more consistent. In my opinion, the conclusion cannot start with "Given the lack of current consensus on ideal management of trigger fingers, it is imperative for providers to pursue shared decision making with their patients". Please modify.
 - a. Addressed
- 2) Keywords must contain at least three words, please add. - In the introduction they talk about the incidence of 2-3% of the population. You should reference it and say where is this incidence? USA? America? Europe? Asia? Worldwide?
 - a. addressed, the incidence reported is worldwide
- 3) In the methods section they say "AMT workers must be older than 18 years of age to participate on the platform". Why do they refer to these workers? Is it important, if so explain why? Is this tool validated or is it experimental? Also, pay-per-response may induce bias in your research.
 - a. They are referred to as workers because they receive compensation from Amazon for completing surveys and other tasks. We do not believe it is important to describe why they are referred to as workers in this study.
 - b. The tool is validated, as described in the previous paragraph and citations 6-8
 - c. Addressed the pay-per-response issue in the limitation section
- 4) I suggest you use a flow chart to check which patients were lost in each of the phases of the study.
 - a. Added as "Figure 1"
- 5) The checklist you send is a checklist for live animal studies, please replace this checklist with another one. I suggest the CONSORT checklist.
 - a. Given this is a survey-based study I believe that it is better described as a cross-sectional study versus a randomized control trial. This being said, I adopted the STROBE guidelines and checklist.

Reviewer 2:

- 1) Title: it does not give enough information. I would try with something like: "Trigger digit patient preferred treatment: an online survey using a crowdsourcing website" (as an example).
 - a. Addressed
- 2) Abstract. BACKGROUND: -Please mention the existence of conservative and invasive options in the second sentence. -Would change "trigger finger" for "trigger digit" throughout the manuscript. It is more correct. AIMS: should be rewritten for clarity. RESULTS: please rephrase the entire section. Avoid repetition of "as the first choice"
 - a. All are addressed except for the change from "trigger finger" to "trigger digit". We as a group wanted this study to outline preference for treatment of stenosis flexor tenosynovitis of the index, middle, ring, and small finger. We thought that

including the thumb was outside the scope of this project and therefore would like to keep “trigger finger” throughout the manuscript. We feel that the majority of clinicians refer to the disease as such.

- 3) Key words: More keywords should be added
 - a. Addressed
- 4) Background. -Please add a reference when mentioning on “the specific aetiology of trigger finger...” -When you address the treatment options in trigger digit (conservative and surgical) please mention specifically corticosteroid injection as one of the most used treatment with a clear scientific support over treatment with splinting. Also add a comment distinguishing open and percutaneous surgical techniques. -Please rewrite the sentences “with diseases like trigger...is ever more important” since that information is included in the previous sentence. I suggest the authors include the idea of the variable degree of disability found among patients (inconstant swelling, painful, etc.).
 - a. Addressed all
- 5) Methods. -Please complete the description of the study as a “descriptive” survey. - Please relocate this appreciation in section “Discussion”: *Studies have shown that AMT produces results similar to conventional surveying techniques and the population surveyed is representative of the U.S. internet population [6-8]* -Please explain in a clearer way the “inclusion criteria”. As I can see these kind of online survey are very open in their inclusion/exclusion criteria. In this regard, is there any exclusion criteria? Previous trigger digit or finger/hand surgery? If not, I would suggest mentioning it as a limitation of the study. -At Scenario 1: 1) “Observation”. We recommend to add the reference (McKee, D., J. Lalonde, and D. Lalonde, How Many Trigger Fingers Resolve Spontaneously Without Any Treatment? *Plast Surg (Oakv)*, 2018. 26(1): p. 52-54.) as you have done with: splinting, injection and surgery, respectively. - 4) “Surgery”: I think I understand that you are talking about "open" surgery but please clarify this point.
 - a. Addressed all
- 6) Results. -See section 8 of these comments.
- 7) Discussion. -You assure that the ring finger (followed by middle, index and little fingers) is the most affected digit but this statement is not supported by any reference. In fact, some authors have reported that thumb is the most affected digit (Castellanos J, Muñoz-Mahamud E, Domínguez E, Del Amo P, Izquierdo O, Fillat P. Long-term effectiveness of corticosteroid injections for trigger finger and thumb. *J Hand Surg Am*. 2015 Jan;40(1):121-6. doi: 10.1016/j.jhsa.2014.09.006. Epub 2014 Oct 14. PMID: 25443167 // Rozental TD, Zurakowski D, Blazar PE. Trigger finger: prognostic indicators of recurrence following corticosteroid injection. *J Bone Joint Surg Am*. 2008 Aug;90(8):1665-72. doi: 10.2106/JBJS.G.00693. PMID: 18676896.). Please check this point. -Please rephrase the sentence about the relation between the metabolic syndrome and trigger digit since it is based on a retrospective observational study (Junot, 21) in a more cautious way. I suggest emphasizing on the well established relationship between trigger digit and diabetes. -We suggest removing the sentence about “subluxation of the extensor tendon...” since it does not discuss your results and, as you mention, is a rare finding. Also remove or summarize the rest of the paragraph, it has redundant concepts. -Please mention the meaning of the abbreviations MCP and PIP

the first time they appear. -About Surgery: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCUTANEOUS–ENDOSCOPIC -OPEN: the bibliography about endoscopic procedures is scarce as well as its use. I suggest the authors to highlight the advantages/disadvantages of using open or percutaneous techniques in your discussion. Maybe this systematic review could help: Zhao JG, Kan SL, Zhao L, Wang ZL, Long L, Wang J, Liang CC. Percutaneous first annular pulley release for trigger digits: a systematic review and meta-analysis of current evidence. J Hand Surg Am. 2014 Nov;39(11):2192-202. doi: 10.1016/j.jhsa.2014.07.044. Epub 2014 Sep 13. PMID: 25227600. ULTRASOUND GUIDED PROCEDURES: in the last 10 years, ultrasound guided procedures have brought about an important change in both, research and clinical fields in hand pathology. I assume that this is not the focus of your manuscript but it should be, at least, mentioned. OPEN: there are many prospective studies supporting the “high” success rate that you mention on the manuscript. We encourage you to be more precise (percentage of success rate reported) in these statement which, in the other hand, is correct. -Please rephrase for clarity the sentence “This information can inform...” on page 11.

- a. Again, the scope of this paper was not meant to include the thumb. This has been clarified and citation added to support the mentioned incidences.
 - b. Addressed all points in the non-operative section
 - c. Addressed all points in the operative section. Added limited details regarding percutaneous release as this was purposely left out of the survey for concerns that this may be difficult to accurately portray to the participants.
- 8) LIMITATIONS: -It might help the readers to number the limitations. -Please develop the idea of lack of information that occurs with an online survey in terms of: description of the treatments, duration of each option, complications, and adverse effects of medication. -Please add as a limitations the fact that the participant is not informed about the severity of the trigger digit (Froimson classification for example) that could be decisive to choose one of the options. According to Kerrigan (already mentioned) on a mild trigger digit injection could be the most efficient option and a good proposition to patients. However, in patients with more pain an limitation the invasive surgical treatment would be preferable by the patient and, probably, underestimated by the participants of the survey. - Please add as a limitation the absence of a percutaneous technique among the options.
- a. Addressed all
- 9) Illustrations and tables Table 1: the second part of the table (percentage) could be simplified by writing the percentages next to each absolute value in the first part of the table. Table 3: please add the p value (<0.05) in the table.
- a. Addressed all
- 10) References -Please correct the following references (missing co-authors): 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 22, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37.
- a. Addressed all