Letter to the Editor

Letter to the editor on the article "Liposomal bupivacaine reduces narcotic use and time to flatus in a retrospective cohort of patients who underwent laparotomy"

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest the article of Burnett et al. in a recent issue of the journal [1]. The authors performed an observational study on 61 patients undergoing laparotomy and concluded that the use of liposomal bupivacaine in laparotomy patients decreases opioid use, time to flatus, and should be considered as a component of post-operative pain control. The authors should be congratulated for performing an interesting study in an important topic (e.g., acute pain) in patients undergoing surgery [2,3]. The current emphasis on the need to improve postoperative recovery and patient satisfaction makes the topic very relevant in surgery [4,5].

Although the study of Burnett and colleagues was well conducted, there are some questions that need to be clarified by the authors to determine the validity of the results. First, the authors did not control for the use of intraoperative analgesics which are known to affect postoperative pain. Second, it is unclear how the authors evaluated postoperative pain. It is well known the use of nurses' evaluation through chart review is not a reliable method [6]. Finally, the authors evaluated multiple outcomes but did not correct their analysis for a Type I error. If the correction was implemented, many of the reported findings would have been different and the conclusions of the study would be changed.

I would welcome comments by the authors as this would help to further support the findings of this important study.

Provenance and peer review

Not Commissioned, internally reviewed.

Ethical approval

No ethical board approval was sought since this is correspondence to a previous published manuscript.

Conflicts of interest

Dr. Harry Mai, M.D. has no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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Author contribution

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