

Review of: "Biliary Complications Following Liver Transplantation: The First Single-Center Tunisian Experience"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Reviewer's comments:

Thanks for asking me to review this manuscript entitled 'Biliary complications following liver transplantation: the first single-center Tunisian experience'.

The findings of this study are important because it is the first report about liver transplantation from Tunisia. However, this work was not presented well by the authors in terms of scientific writing. The manuscript needs extensive English editing.

To improve the manuscript, the following points need to be considered:

Abstract:

- In the 4th line of the 4th paragraph, correct the lowercase 't' of 'the' following a full stop to uppercase.
- Remove the extra space before the sentence starting with "By" in the 5th line of the 4th paragraph.
- Correct the use of lowercase letters after a full stop in the 6th line of the 5th paragraph for the word 'multivariate'.
- Correct "un literature" to "in literature" in the first sentence of the last paragraph.

Introduction:

- Since 56 patients underwent liver transplantation in Tunisia, including all these patients in the study will make the findings more representative, and the study will be a multicenter work.
- The use of simple language will be more understandable to readers. Please change 'Achilles's heel' to something else.
- Include references specifying the direct association of complications of liver transplant and the short- and long-term outcomes.
- Provide references when claiming that biliary complications have a considerable burden on the health care system.
- Add a paragraph summarizing the liver transplant experience in the Middle East or neighboring countries to Tunisia, focusing on the biliary complications and the gap of knowledge that needs to be filled.

Methods:

- Add a space between 'retrospective' and 'is' in the first sentence.

- Correct the spelling mistake with the word "syndrome" in the last sentence.
- In the study endpoints section, provide a definition for early and late mortality.
- Add a space between words in the third sentence regarding 'logistic regression' in the statistical analysis section.
- Add 'U' in the Mann-Whitney U test.
- The use of a Kaplan-Meier curve is necessary to present the outcome.

Results:

- Provide information on the two patients who required re-transplantation.
- Provide the exact number and its percentage of the described patients in the whole manuscript in order to maintain consistent description.
- Since 18 patients had complications (10 early and 11 late), did some patients have both early and late complications? Please specify.
- Adding a table describing all the patients and dividing them into two groups, with or without complications, will help better understanding.
- Consider presenting either the mean \pm standard deviation or the median and interquartile range according to whether distribution normality is better than using a wide range to describe the postoperative days, and donor and recipient age.
- The phrase "causing the death of the patients" in the third line of the second paragraph. Any associated morbidities in these two patients who died?
- Change "didn't have the same ABO blood group" to "had a different ABO blood group" for clarity in the last sentence concerning pre-operative data.
- Correct the misspelling of "syndrome" in the postoperative data section.
- Clearly define early and late mortality.
- Avoid uncommon abbreviations like "BCs" and spell out all the abbreviations at the first use, including "MELD."
- Adding a Kaplan-Meier curve to present the patients' outcomes is necessary in this type of study.

Discussion:

- Add a space between the words "complication once" at the beginning of the first paragraph.
- Add a space between the words "in surgical" in the second sentence of the first paragraph.
- Provide an explanation for the higher complication rate in this study.
- Correct the misspelling of "development if biliary complications" to "development of biliary complications" in the second paragraph.
- Use the singular form of "factor" instead of the plural in the third paragraph.
- Rephrase "important portal hypertension" mentioned in the second sentence of the third paragraph to the exact stage of the portal hypertension.
- In the fourth sentence of the third paragraph, refer to bilirubin measurement, delete the word 'number' after 'serum bilirubin level'.
- Spell out all these abbreviations: CJ, DD, PSC, and HAT as they were not used earlier in the manuscript.

- Address all potential limitations for this study in a separate paragraph at the end of the discussion, such as the small sample size, the limited number of centers, and the restricted time period.
- The strengths and implications of the study findings should be also mentioned.

Conclusion

- The conclusion does not reflect the study findings. The conclusion paragraph should be moved up to become the last paragraph in the discussion, and the conclusion should be written to answer the research questions.

Tables and Figures:

- This manuscript is lacking the tables and figures showing the patients' demography, univariate and multivariate analyses, along with Kaplan-Meier curves.