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OPEN PEER REVIEW

Investigating the Anogenital Distance as a Predictive Factor for Improvement in Semen Analysis Parameters After Varicocele Surgery

Alireza Kheradmand, Mohsen Sarkarian, Mohammadreza Lashayei, Seyyed Mokhtar Hosseini, Mohamadreza Dadfar

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1 Original submission

2 comments · 3 Jul 2024 – 3 Jul 2024

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 3 Jul 2024

Major Revision

Editor-in-Chief

MAJOR REVISION 3 Jul 2024

Major Revision

2

Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

In response to the dear reviewer's comments:

1-sample size formula was designed according to Eisenbrg et al study (Eisenberg ML, Hsieh MH, Walters RC et al: The relationship between anogenital distance, fatherhood, and fertility in adult men. PLoS One 2011; 6: e18973.) with the 90% power and taking alpha 0.05 and the result was 35 patients

we believe that it was the minimum authorized sample size for our referral center during the 2 year period of study

2- Since our study was an observational project , our bio-statistician did not recommend adding a control group especially because we do not have any study which determines of standards of AGD in Iranian population

3- All AGD measurements were taken meticulously by the co-responding author (mr.Lashayei) and the precision of the measurements were double checked

4- we checked our all potential confounding variables including weight , Height , BMI and Age and found no significant differences on the results (added to the result section)

5-according to the previous studies and routine clinical practice it seems 6months follow up period is adequate to observe significant semen parametrical changes after surgery

6-Generally speaking since substantial uncertainties persist regarding the actual influence of varicocele repair on sperm and fertility parameters , our findings indicate that infertile patients and shorter AGDs with primary varicocele have the same chance of improvement in their semen parameters after varicocelectomy (added to the text)

7-Other factors such as Life style (smoking , physical inactivity , daily diet), Hormonal factors , patients psychologic status evaluation were important cofounding factors that were not included in the study , so they were added to the shortcoming of the study (added to the limitations of the study to the text)

8-In this study we employed the technique of sub-inguinal incision microscopic varicocelectomy for all patients which is the routine technique (added to the material and method section)

9-Despite minor improvement in semen parameters 6 months after varicocelectomy surgery Our findings did not demonstrate statistically significant differences in sperm analysis factors before and six months after varicocelectomy surgery. This outcome contradicts the results of a substantial meta-analysis by Cannarella et al.

Cannarella R, Shah R, Hamoda TA-AA-M, Boitrelle F, Saleh R, Gul M, et al. Does Varicocele Repair Improve Conventional Semen Parameters? A Meta-Analytic Study of Before- After Data. World J Mens Health. 2023;41.

10-We recommend a prospective controlled study with a larger sample size considering more confounding factors such as Life style(smoking , physical inactivity, daily diet) , Hormonal factors , patients psychologic status evaluation , environmental factors , utilizing computer assisted sperm analysis (CASA) and DFI (included in conclusion section)

2 Revision 1

1 comment · 10 Jul 2024

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 10 Jul 2024

Accept