

Letter to the Editor concerning “Biomechanical evaluation of the Facet Wedge: a refined technique for facet fixation” by Hartensuer R. et al.; Eur Spine J (2014) 23:2321–2329

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The authors evaluate the biomechanical strength of ‘facet wedge’ for stabilization of the spine [1]. The authors find that the technique has comparable stability to pedicle screws and advantages over translaminar screws.

The stabilization of the facets and distraction arthrodesis of facets has indeed a great potential for stabilization of the spine. The facets are the only true joints of the spine. Facets rather than the discs are probably the site of origin of degenerative processes in the spine [2]. Facetal listhesis and instability related to muscle disuse or abuse could be a primary issue that initiates the process of spinal degeneration [3, 4]. Distraction of the facets and their stabilization obviates the need of any additional surgical procedures in a number of degenerative spinal conditions [5, 6]. It is surprising that the authors call it a ‘refined’, ‘new’ and a ‘novel’ technique of spinal stabilization. The authors are encouraged to review several of our published papers on the subject [2–6]. Our clinical and anatomical studies on the subject bring out clearly the potential of facet wedge fixation. Even available biomechanical studies on the subject have not been scrutinized [7]. Ignoring published material, particularly in the modern computer era where references can be available on fingertips cannot be pardoned. Material in a reputed spine journal can certainly and adversely influence future publications on the subject. It would have been prudent on the authors to review

published material before undertaking their work and making erroneous claims.

Conflict of interest There is no conflict of interest.

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