

Response to the Letter to the Editor—Re: Gastric Band Removal in Revisional Bariatric Surgery, One-Step Versus Two-Step: a Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

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Response

Thank you for your interest in our systematic review and meta-analysis [1]. We agree that revisional bariatric surgery and gastric band removal timing is a very important and topical subject.

We would advise the authors, however, to be very hesitant prior to ignoring our systematic review, of all available literature, and concluding that it “does not bring any evidence regarding the safety of one-step procedure.” We feel your critical appraisal of our review is quite flawed. To begin with, sample size calculations are typically done to determine the number of patients required for a *primary study*. However, for systematic reviews, the intent is to combine all available data to clarify a research question; a power calculation is not usually performed. Despite this, we made the limitations of our conclusions quite clear, as outlined by the standard of reporting for systematic reviews [2, 3]. While our study represents the synthesis of the best available evidence to date, we do feel that further studies should be done to continue to clarify the risk of leaks in one- vs two-step gastric banding revisions. Briefly, regarding your comments on the quality of our meta-analysis and the PRISMA checklist, all eleven studies included were case-

controlled trials and not randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Assessing the quality of studies and risk of bias is typically done for RCTs with assessment of randomization, blinding, and other biases (see Cochrane Handbook) [4].

Critical appraisal is an essential element of improving the reporting of data, and we are therefore appreciative of your potential concerns. We look forward to collaborating with you and *Obesity Surgery* in the future.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethics Approval For this type of study formal consent is not required.

Informed Consent Does not apply.

Conflict of Interest Jerry Dang, Noah Switzer, and Xinzhe Shi have none to declare. Shahzeer Karmali is a consultant for Gore Medical and Ethicon.

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