A Backwards Step for Pilonidal Sinus Flap Surgery?

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Dear Editor,

We appreciate the recent letter to the editor by Wysocki A in response to our article. We are grateful and acknowledge the typographical error on the year of Hodges' article in the main text.

We need to focus on a broader perspective on certain issues raised. There is no best surgical procedure for all. We do not claim to have irrefutably established the superiority of off-midline closure. Various studies have done this, and our study has not addressed the issue of midline vs off-midline closure at all. Our data, however, indicate that Karydakos' procedure has a much steeper learning curve. The images depicted in our article are of the Dufourmentel flap. The rhomboid flaps chosen by the surgical residents ranged from a classical Limberg to Dufourmentel to various modifications of them. Limberg AA described the mathematics of his flap in 1946 [1] paving the way for its numerous modifications, and hence, we have generically labelled our flaps "Limberg" in his honour instead of obfuscating the issue for surgical residents. As is said, coming close to a tree, one loses sight of the forest. Our focus was on teaching the residents the principles of flaps and their correct execution rather than deliberating on differences.

Incidentally, the first report of pilonidal sinus is disputed between Mayo (1833) and Anderson (1847) [2]. Mayo describes a cyst containing hair, and Anderson describes ulcer with loose hair in it. Mayo's description has been labelled by some to possibly be a dermoid cyst.

Racial characteristics, patient profiles, medical and health infrastructure all contribute to decision making and outcomes in surgical management. In our developing nation with yawning gaps between disease and tertiary care deliverance, our study shows the safety and efficacy of Limberg flaps at the level of primary care surgeons.

We thank the author for their valuable comments and contribution to our article and hope our article adds to the better understanding and management of pilonidal disease.

References

1. Limberg AA (1946) Mathematical principles of local plastic procedures on the surface of the human body. Medgis, Leningrad
2. Velasco AL, Dunlap WW (2009) Pilonidal disease and hidradenitis. Surg Clin N Am 89:689–701

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