LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Authors' Reply

TO THE EDITORS:

Thank you for your interest and comments regarding our article comparing the Ligasure versus Harmonic hemostasis technique for thyroidectomy. The primary goal of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in cost between the two surgical devices used, and the same thyroidectomy technique was used in both groups. As for the rationale to tie the main vessels on the patient's side, we had four surgeons involved in the study and our techniques vary considerably when it comes to the use of hemostatic devices (no use of clips or ties to routine use of ties). Thus, we wanted a standard approach that all surgeons involved in the study could agree to use. Numerous studies have shown reduced operative time with the use of

hemostatic devices compared with conventional techniques, and again, this was not the purpose of our study.

In regards to the distribution of total thyroidectomy versus lobectomy, the patients were randomized before the operation, and the difference observed in case type was not statistically significant. As for the distribution of cases for the individual surgeon, we also found no statistical difference in the distribution among the surgeons ($P = 0.74$). Furthermore, the two surgeons with shorter operative times performed a higher proportion of the total thyroidectomies. This is opposite of what is expected if the data was skewed by the type of operation. We do not use drains for thyroidectomy, and it was not used in the trial.

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