

**Bipolar diathermy in tonsillectomy**

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read in the January 1992 Issue of the Journal a paper by Choy and Su on bipolar diathermy in tonsillectomy, as this was the topic of my own first publication in 1980. Choy and Su have used a similar methodology and reached similar conclusions, both as regards post-operative pain and ability to control bleeding.

My own study was really aimed at assessing the coagulative abilities of the bipolar diathermy in tonsillectomy. I believe that I was the first to use bipolar diathermy in this way. I was certainly unable to find any earlier published work on the subject, but then Choy and Su do not appear to have found my paper either.

Yours faithfully,  
Ewen Flint, F.R.C.S.,  
Consultant ENT Surgeon,  
Dumfries and Galloway,  
Royal Infirmary,  
Bankend Road,  
Dumfries DG1 4AP.

**References**

- Flint, E. F. (1980) The use of the bipolar microcoagulator for haemostasis in tonsillectomy. *Clinical Otolaryngology*, **5**, 273–275.  
Choy, A. T. K., Su, A. P. (1992) Bipolar diathermy or ligation for haemostasis in tonsillectomy. *Journal of Laryngology and Otolaryngology*, **106**: 21–22.

**Reply:**

Dear Sir,

Mr Ewen Flint kindly sent us a copy of his article 'The use of the bipolar microcoagulator for haemostasis in tonsillectomy' published in 1980, which certainly covers identical ground to our paper, and we were pleased to find that the results and conclusions agree. We wish to point out in particular the agreement re the advantages of bipolar over unipolar diathermy which have not been noted in textbooks of Otolaryngology.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to correct our statement 'This is the first controlled trial . . .' which should now read 'this is the second . . . '! We apologize for failing to discover Mr Flint's paper. Our failure

interestingly demonstrates the danger of depending blindly on new technology. We had checked for previous articles on bipolar diathermy using textbooks, and also a 'Compact Disc' Index Medicus, and the latter had found articles related to bipolar diathermy in colorectal and ophthalmic surgery only. Unfortunately the earliest Compact Disc libraries of Index Medicus references that we found (in the R.S.M. library) were of 1983, and thus the computer search failed to uncover Mr Flint's article of 1980.

Yours faithfully,  
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Grays,  
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**Treatment of 'Vasomotor rhinitis' by the local application of Silver Nitrate**

Dear Sir,

In your April 1991 issue, S. M. Al-Samarrae claims to have described a new method of treating 'Vasomotor rhinitis' by silver nitrate application. The author (Bhargava *et al.*, 1980) of this letter has already described the treatment of allergic vasomotor rhinitis by local application of silver nitrate in your esteemed journal 11 years ago.

Yours faithfully,  
Dr K. B. Bhargava

**Reply:**

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 10 December 1991.

Painting of the nose with silver nitrate solution in treatment of allergic and vasomotor rhinitis has been practised for some time. My report results were quite similar to those reported by Dr Bhargava *et al.* in 1980 and I am sorry that I did not have volume 94 at the time I wrote my report and therefore, I missed mentioning that reference.

Yours faithfully,  
S. M. Al-Samarrae, F.R.C.S.,  
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