Evaluation of Surgical Methods for Treatment of Cubital Tunnel Syndrome – Statistical Perspectives

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Abstract:

This commentary addresses strengths and weaknesses of the clinical trial study protocol designed by Liu et al., in particular with regard of the methodology, taking into consideration the commentary article "Assessing surgical methods for treatment of cubital tunnel syndrome - which is the best?" Our commentary emphasizes the importance of adjustment for known prognostic covariates, such as duration of symptoms and advanced age that have been negatively correlated with outcomes in previous studies. Subgroup analysis for the treatment groups of interest, namely moderate and severe cubital tunnel syndrome, which have previously shown conflicting differences in efficacy of surgical options is highly recommended. Intention-to-treat analysis is a preferable approach for the evaluation of primary outcome measures to lessen the bias. Use of well-validated composite outcome measure is strongly encouraged.

Keywords:

cubital tunnel syndrome; orthopedic surgery; research methodology; medical statistics

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