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**Departament de Pediatria, d'Obstetrícia i Ginecologia i de Medicina
Preventiva**

TESIS DOCTORAL

Tratamiento endoscópico de la hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices de esófago y estómago

Memoria de tesis presentada por Eddy Marcelo Ríos Castellanos para optar al grado de Doctor en Medicina por la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, realizada bajo la dirección del Dr. Xavier Bonfill i Cosp.

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CONFLICTOS DE INTERÉS

El autor declara a su mejor entender no tener conflictos de interés en el tema general ni en ninguno de los artículos presentados como partes de este trabajo de tesis.

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RESUMEN

1. RESUMEN

Antecedentes:

La hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices esófago gástricas es una de las emergencias más dramáticas de la medicina, y a pesar de todos los avances en su prevención y tratamiento presenta un riesgo vital importante para los pacientes que la presentan. Es una de las complicaciones de los pacientes con hipertensión portal debida a cirrosis hepática de cualquier etiología, ya sea alcohólica, viral, inmunológica, parasitaria o esteato hepatitis, patologías de alta prevalencia en todo el mundo.

Dentro del espectro de tratamientos para la emergencia, los procedimientos endoscópicos son los más efectivos, y se están desarrollando y mejorando continuamente. Los métodos tradicionales de esclerosis endoscópica con diversos compuestos derivados del alcohol, están siendo reemplazados por la ligadura endoscópica esofágicas con bandas elásticas en las várices esofágicas, y con la esclerosis endoscópica con cianoacrilato y ligadura con bandas elásticas en las várices gástricas. La evidencia de las ventajas y los daños producidos por estos tratamientos es aún controversial, y aún no hay acuerdo en el mejor tratamiento. Las guías clínicas que tratan el tema de hemorragia variceal, recomiendan ambos indistintamente o con inconsistencias en los grados de evidencia.

Este trabajo de tesis pretende contribuir a aclarar el rol específico de la ligadura endoscópica de las várices esofágicas y de la inyección por cianoacrilato en las várices gástricas, además de estudiar la calidad y el contenido de las principales guías clínicas que tratan del tema.

Metodología:

Para contribuir con evidencia en la efectividad de estos tratamientos, se han llevado a cabo tres investigaciones independientes e interrelacionadas:

- Un trabajo de campo clínico, aplicando la considerable experiencia local del Hospital Regional y la Clínica Alemana de Temuco, Chile, comparando la efectividad de la ligadura elástica versus la esclerosis endoscópica con maleato de etanolamina en el tratamiento de várices esofágicas sangrantes, mediante un diseño de cohortes.
- Una revisión sistemática de ensayos clínicos aleatorizados de la literatura, que comparen la esclerosis endoscópica con cianoacrilato versus la esclerosis endoscópica con compuestos derivados del alcohol y la ligadura endoscópica con bandas elásticas en el tratamiento de várices gástricas sangrantes.

- Una evaluación de las guías de práctica clínica universales dedicadas al tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices de esófago y estómago, con el propósito actual de identificar a las mejores guías y propósito futuro de contribuir a la actualización de estas aplicando los resultados de los dos primeros estudios.

Resultados:

Los estudios correspondientes han dado como resultados principales:

- La comparación de las cohortes de tratamiento con ligadura endoscópica versus la esclerosis endoscópica con etanolamina mostró una clara superioridad de la primera, disminuyendo efectivamente la mortalidad y el re-sangrado, obteniendo una calidad de evidencia moderada por el tipo de diseño (grado de recomendación B, nivel de evidencia 2b).
- La revisión sistemática de la literatura de la esclerosis con cianoacrilato versus la esclerosis endoscópica con derivados del alcohol y ligadura endoscópica en várices gástricas, mostró disminución en la recidiva del sangrado comparado con el uso de ligaduras elásticas, basados en 4 ensayos clínicos con evidencia de heterogeneidad moderada, calidad de la evidencia pobre y probable imprecisión de los resultados por los números estudiados de pacientes. También mostró superioridad del cianoacrilato para el control de la hemorragia activa, la disminución del re-sangrado, la disminución de la mortalidad por sangrado y las complicaciones comparadas con la esclerosis con derivados del alcohol, pero cuyos resultados que deben tomarse con mucha cautela por provenir de un solo ensayo.
- Las guías clínicas que tratan del tema del tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices esófago-gástricas muestran una mejoría de los documentos más recientes, con una calidad general moderada y con dos guías que alcanzan alta recomendación. En estas guías, ya están incorporada la mejoría del tratamiento de ligadura como la mejor opción en las várices esofágicas, pero aún mantienen las opciones de ligadura y cianoacrilato con igual grado de recomendación en las várices gástricas, lo que probablemente debería corregirse a la recomendación preferencial del cianoacrilato en cierto tipo de várices, dados los resultados de los trabajos de esta tesis.

Conclusión:

Los trabajos realizados logran demostrar que el tratamiento endoscópico con ligaduras elásticas de las várices esofágicas presenta considerables ventajas sobre la

esclerosis endoscópica con derivados del alcohol, sin aumentar sus riesgos. En las várices gástricas, el tratamiento de esclerosis endoscópica con cianoacrilato presenta ventajas en la mayor parte de los posibles resultados comparado con la esclerosis endoscópica con derivados del alcohol, y una disminución estadísticamente significativa del re-sangrado comparado con la ligadura elástica. Todos estos resultados deben, sin embargo, tomarse con cautela, dadas las limitaciones en la calidad de la evidencia obtenida. La revisión sistemática realizada es una contribución efectiva para la toma de decisiones, y será de importancia en sugerir modificaciones a las guías de práctica clínica sobre el tema. Estas guías a su vez, han sido analizadas tanto en su calidad como en sus contenidos y los resultados publicados.

SUMMARY

1.1 ABSTRACT

Background:

Upper digestive bleeding due to the rupture of esophago-gastric varices is one of the most dramatic emergencies in medicine, and despite all the advances in its prevention and treatment, it is still life threatening for the patients who present it. It is one of the worst complications in patients with portal hypertension due to hepatic cirrhosis of any aetiology, alcoholic, viral, immunological, parasitic or esteatohepatitis, all pathologies with high prevalence all over the world.

In terms of the treatment range, endoscopic procedures are most effective to deal with the emergency, and these are being continually developed and improved. The traditional methods of endoscopic sclerotherapy with various alcohol-based compounds are being replaced by endoscopic band ligation for oesophageal varices, and by endoscopic sclerotherapy with cyanoacrylate and band ligation for gastric varices. The evidence of the advantages and damages produced by these treatments are still controversial, and to date there is no agreement regarding the best treatment. This translates into clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) that deal with the subject of variceal bleeding; the methods are recommended indistinctly, or with inconsistencies in the levels of evidence. The aim of this thesis is to contribute in clarifying the specific role of endoscopic ligation for oesophageal varices and cyanoacrylate injection for gastric varices and to study the quality and contents of the main clinical guidelines dealing with esophago-gastric variceal bleeding.

Methodology:

In order to contribute with evidence on the efficacy of these treatments, three independent and interrelated investigations have been carried out:

- A clinical field study, using the considerable local experience gathered at the Regional Hospital and Clínica Alemana of Temuco, Chile, comparing the efficacy of the endoscopy band ligation versus traditional endoscopic sclerotherapy with ethanolamine maleate on oesophageal varices using a cohort design.
- A Cochrane systematic literature review, comparing endoscopic sclerotherapy with cyanoacrylate versus sclerotherapy with alcohol-based compounds and endoscopic band ligation in gastric variceal bleeding.
- An assessment of the available CPGs found in the literature dedicated to the treatment of bleeding due to esophago-gastric varices, with the aim to identify and assess the quality of the main CPGs and the future aim of contributing to updating these with the results of the first two studies.

Results:

The corresponding studies have had the following main outcomes:

- The comparison of the treatment cohorts of endoscopic ligation versus endoscopic sclerotherapy with ethanolamine showed a clear superiority of the first, with an effective decrease in mortality and re-bleeding. Due to the type of design the grade of recommendation is B, and the level of evidence is 2b.
- The systematic review of sclerotherapy with cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic sclerotherapy with alcohol-based compounds for gastric varices, based in only one trial, suggest superiority of cyanoacrylate, increasing the control of active bleeding, decreasing re-bleeding and mortality due to bleeding and decreasing complications, and a decrease in re-bleeding when compared with the use of band ligations, based in four trials with high risk of bias and imprecision (grade of recommendation A, level of evidence 1b).
- The CPGs that deal with the subject of treating bleeding due to esophago-gastric varices shows an improvement in the most recent documents, with a moderate overall quality and two guidelines that achieve recommendation without observations. The results of the endoscopic band ligation as the best option for oesophageal varices has already been incorporated into these guidelines, but they still maintain the options of ligation and cyanoacrylate with an equal degree of recommendation for gastric varices, which could be corrected to the preferential recommendation of cyanoacrylate due to its advantages in less re-bleeding, especially in varices type IG1.

Conclusion:

The studies performed demonstrate that endoscopic treatment with band ligation of oesophageal varices presents considerable advantages over endoscopic sclerotherapy with alcohol derivatives. For gastric varices, endoscopic sclerotherapy with cyanoacrylate presents advantages in the main outcomes compared with endoscopic sclerotherapy with alcohol compounds, and decrease in re-bleeding compared with band ligation, however, caution must be applied due to risk of bias and imprecision. The systematic review contributes to decision-making, and will be of importance in preparing modifications to the CPGs on the subject. The main GPGs have been assessed in quality and contents and these results published.

2. INTRODUCCION

2. INTRODUCCIÓN

2.1 El problema

Consideraciones básicas anatómicas y fisiopatológicas

Las várices de esófago y estómago son un conjunto de venas longitudinales y tortuosas que se desarrollan en el tercio inferior del esófago, la unión del estómago y el esófago, la zona subcardial y fondo del estómago, comunicándose con la circulación para esofágica extensa mediante venas perforantes, dentro del sistema venoso portal (Figura 1) y (Figura 2).

Figura 1.- Sistema venoso portal normal

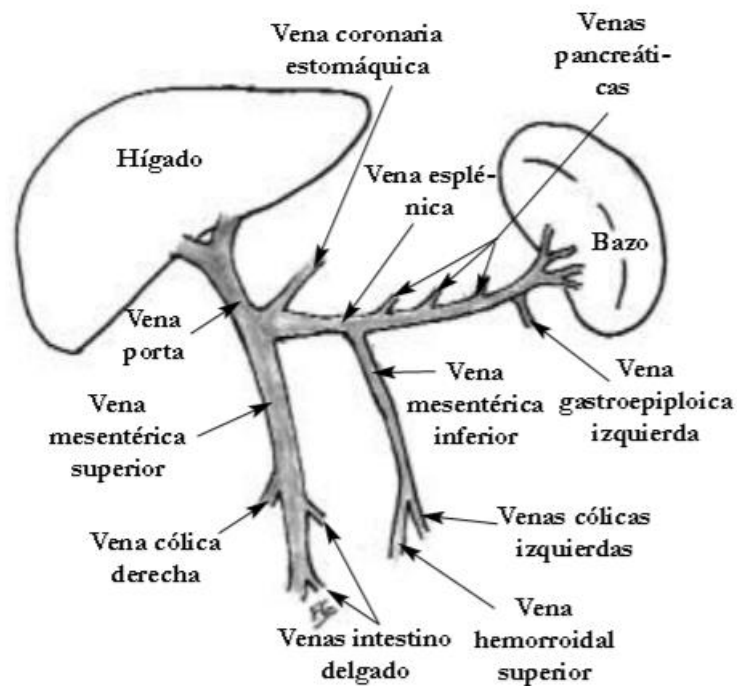
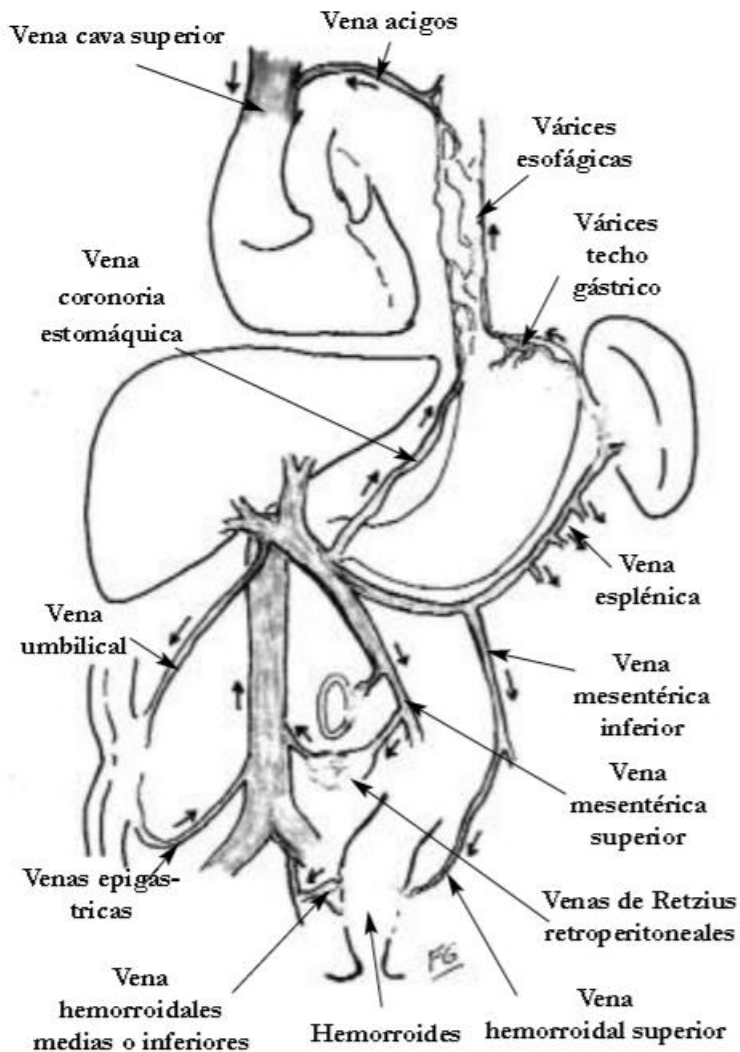


Figura 2.- Desarrollo de colaterales de derivación en la hipertensión portal



La patogenia de las várices es debida a la obstrucción del flujo venoso portal, por una variedad de etiologías que comprometen el hígado causando cirrosis hepática, lo que resulta en un incremento de la presión de la vena porta (normalmente de 5 – 10 mm Hg). Esta vena se forma por la vena esplénica y la mesentérica superior, y transporta el flujo proveniente del intestino delgado y grueso, del bazo y del estómago.

La definición de hipertensión portal consiste en un aumento de la presión portal por sobre 15 mm Hg y está directamente relacionada con el flujo venoso portal y su grado de resistencia, y se expresa en términos de la ley de Ohm:

$$\text{Presión portal} = \text{Flujo venoso portal} \times \text{Resistencia al flujo}$$

Cuando la presión portal se incrementa, se desarrolla una red de circulaciones colaterales que derivan el flujo del sistema portal a la circulación venosa sistémica. Estas colaterales se forman por la dilatación de canales vasculares de pequeño calibre pre-existentes que conectan el sistema venoso portal con las venas cavas superior e inferior.

Concomitantemente al aumento de la presión portal, también existe una disminución del flujo portal dentro del hígado causada por una variedad de mecanismos de producción y de mantención propios de la cirrosis, que se pueden clasificar en aquellos que aumentan la resistencia: reducción del calibre sinusoidal debido al aumento de tamaño de los hepatocitos; alteración de las propiedades elásticas de la pared sinusoidal debido a depósitos de colágeno; compresión de las vénulas hepáticas causada por la aparición de nódulos de regeneración; lesiones de las venas centrales causadas por la fibrosis peri-venosa; cambios veno-oclusivos y bloqueo peri-sinusoidal causado por la inflamación portal, la fibrosis portal y la necrosis en sacabocado, más el aumento del flujo sanguíneo.

El flujo sanguíneo portal se encuentra además fuertemente alterado por desequilibrio entre sustancias vaso-activas que se encuentran aumentadas en los cuadros de cirrosis hepática, como la endotelina 1 (ET-1), la angiotensina II, la trombina, la sustancia P y el tromboxano (todos vasoconstrictores), y los que se encuentran disminuidos, como el óxido nítrico (NO) producido por las células endoteliales de los sinusoides, y el monóxido de carbono (ambos vasodilatadores). El desequilibrio de estas sustancias se traduce en una vasoconstricción del territorio venoso portal. Existe también un aumento del flujo sanguíneo, por aumento del volumen circulante, debida a retención anormal de agua y sodio por el riñón, como respuesta a una vasodilatación periférica generalizada.

Consideraciones etiológicas

Existen una variedad de etiologías para el daño hepático que desembocan en la hipertensión portal, las que usualmente se han clasificado en causas pre-hepáticas, hepáticas y post-hepáticas, de acuerdo a la situación de la enfermedad en relación a la dirección del flujo venoso (Tabla 1).

Tabla 1.- Clasificación de las etiologías más comunes que producen daño hepático

PREHEPATICA		
Compromiso del Eje Esplenoportal Trombosis Compresión Tumoral Hipoplasia Congénita	↑ Flujo Portal Fístula A-V Espl.Tropical Mastocitosis	Mixta E. Mieloproliferativa Linfoma No Hodking Leucemia
HEPATICA		
Presinusoidal Esquistosomiasis Cirrosis Biliar Primaria Inicial Hepatitis Crónica Fibrosis Hepática Congénita Granulomas Hipertensión Portal Idiopática Hiperplasia Nodular Regenerativa Toxinas: Arsénico, Cobre Cloruro de Vinilo	Sinusoidal Cirrosis Alcohólica Hepatitis Alcohólica Intoxicación Vit. A	Postsinusoidal Enf. Venó-oclusiva Esclerosis Vena Central (Alcohol)
POSTHEPATICA		
Cardíacas Pericarditis Constrictiva Insuficiencia Cardíaca Derecha Enfermedad Valvular Mitral Insuficiencia Tricuspídea	Vena Cava Inferior-Venas Hepáticas Síndrome de Budd Chiari Trombosis Membranas	

Es interesante que la distribución mundial de estas patologías sea variada en todo el mundo, ya que la causa más prevalente en la mayor parte de los países latinoamericanos es la cirrosis hepática de origen alcohólico, mientras que las etiologías post hepatitis virales son mucho más prevalentes en el Asia, y las parasitarias en países tropicales. En Temuco, Región de la Araucanía de Chile, donde se origina este trabajo de tesis, las patologías prevalentes de daño hepático crónico que desarrollan hipertensión portal son (en orden de prevalencia): Cirrosis por alcohol, cirrosis post daño auto inmunitario, cirrosis post esteatohepatitis y cirrosis post hepatitis viral por virus B y C (datos propios). Todo este conjunto representa una de las patologías más frecuentes de hospitalización en una sala de medicina interna de una hospital público.

La hemorragia por ruptura de várices esófago gástricas

La hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices esofágicas y/o gástricas es una de las complicaciones más dramáticas de los pacientes con hipertensión portal debida a cirrosis hepática de cualquier origen, y conllevan mortalidad y morbilidad muy altas. Las várices esofágicas se encuentran en el 39% de todos los pacientes cirróticos, de los cuales el 55% sangran en algún momento, y el 67% de estos últimos vuelven a sangrar luego que el primer episodio se hubo detenido o controlado. Del

18% al 26% de los pacientes que sangran mueren dependiendo de varios factores, entre ellos el tratamiento recibido (datos propios) y la gravedad de la enfermedad de base. Las várices mixtas esófago gástricas se presentan en un 18% de todos los pacientes cirróticos, y las puramente gástricas en un 6.9% (1-5). Las várices gástricas presentan sangrados más profusos y con mortalidad que puede alcanzar el 50%.

Las várices gástricas difieren de las várices esofágicas en el hecho de que várices gástricas de gran tamaño pueden desarrollarse con presiones portales significativamente inferiores, y sangran con un menor gradiente de presión. Las várices gástricas reciben su afluyente sanguíneo de las venas cortas y de las gástricas posteriores, a diferencia de las esofágicas que reciben su afluyente sanguíneo de las venas coronarias gástricas derecha e izquierda.

Clasificación de las várices esofágicas

De las muchas clasificaciones de várices esofágicas propuestas, la que resulta más práctica es la de la Organización Mundial de Endoscopia Gastrointestinal (OMEG) que las clasifica en: 1.- Finas (tamaño pequeño que desaparecen con la insuflación); 2.- Moderadas (que ocupan 1/3 de la luz esofágica sin excesiva insuflación) y 3.- Grandes que ocupan más de la mitad de la luz esofágica, no desaparecen con la insuflación y presentan un aspecto pseudo tumoral.

Clasificación de las várices gástricas

Las várices gástricas han sido clasificadas por varios autores (5-7), tanto en tamaño como en situación siendo la clasificación por tamaño (pequeñas < 5 mm, medianas 5 – 10 mm y grandes > 10 mm) y la clasificación por situación propuesta por Sarín (6) (Figura 3), las más utilizadas. Estas clasificaciones, tienen además un componente pronóstico, ya que se comportan de manera más o menos agresiva de acuerdo a su tamaño y situación (6-9) (Tabla 2).

Figura 3.- Clasificación de Sarín para las vórices esófago gástricas

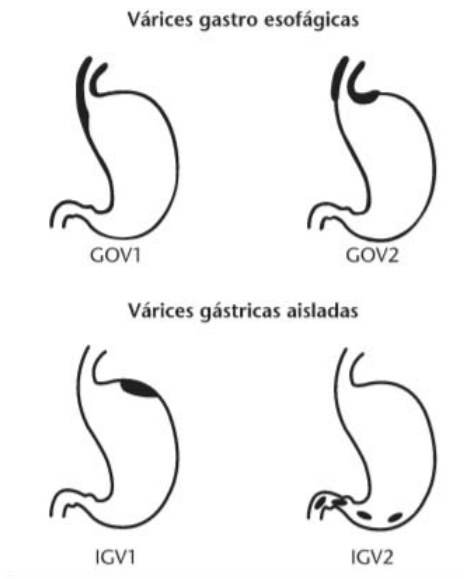


Tabla 2.- Clasificación de las vórices gástricas de acuerdo a los criterios de Sarín (6), mostrando su frecuencia y su riesgo de sangrado.

Clasificación	Localización	Vórices esofágicas	Incidencia %	Tasa de Hemorragia %
GOV1	Curvatura menor	Si	14.9	11.8 %
GOV2	Fondo	Sí	5.5	55 %
IGV1	Fondo	No	1.6	78 %
IGV2	Cuerpo, antro, píloro.	No	3.9	9 %

Los factores de riesgo de sangrado para ambos tipos de vórices son el tamaño, la presencia de puntos rojos en la superficie de las vórices y el grado de gravedad de la enfermedad hepática de base (8-11).

Tratamiento del sangrado por vórices esofágicas

Existen una variedad de tratamientos endoscópicos posibles para el sangrado por vórices esófago gástricas (12-22) que se pueden clasificar en:

- Tratamiento médico (uso de fármacos vaso activos).
- Tratamiento mecánico (sondas compresivas).

- Tratamiento endoscópico (escleroterapia, ligadura elástica, clips y ligadura de lazo).
- Terapia combinada (fármacos + tratamiento endoscópico).
- Colocación de TIPS (Tranjugular Intrahepatic Portosystemic Shunt), con técnicas de radiología intervencionista.
- Tratamiento quirúrgico de varios tipos.

Los métodos endoscópicos, ya sea solos o en combinación se pueden también utilizar en una variedad de escenarios:

- Tratamiento de la hemorragia activa (hemorragia que se está produciendo en el momento de la endoscopia).
- Tratamiento de la hemorragia aguda (hemorragia que se ha detenido en el momento de la endoscopia, pero que dejó marcas que atestiguan que el sangrado se produjo hace minutos u horas).
- Profilaxis primaria de la hemorragia (cuando se detectan várices con riesgo de sangrado, pero que aún no se ha presentado).
- Profilaxis secundaria de la hemorragia (hemorragia ya sucedida y/o controlada, pero con persistencia de várices o formación de nuevos paquetes varicosos).
- Obliteración de várices (tratamiento endoscópico destinado a hacer desaparecer físicamente las várices en una o más sesiones endoscópicas una vez controlado el sangramiento).

Se han desarrollado recientemente métodos endoscópicos y fármacos vaso activos que logran detener la mayoría de los episodios de sangrado agudo, con disminución de la mortalidad inmediata debida a la hemorragia cuyos niveles de evidencia están aún por consolidarse. Existen un número importante de trabajos observacionales, ensayos clínicos, revisiones sistemáticas y guías clínicas al respecto que demuestran efectos variables en la detención del episodio de hemorragia aguda, mayor eficacia en los métodos endoscópicos y aparentes mejoras a mediano y largo plazo de la mortalidad.

El presente trabajo de tesis se enfoca en el tratamiento endoscópico de las várices de esófago y/o estómago, en situación de hemorragia activa o aguda.

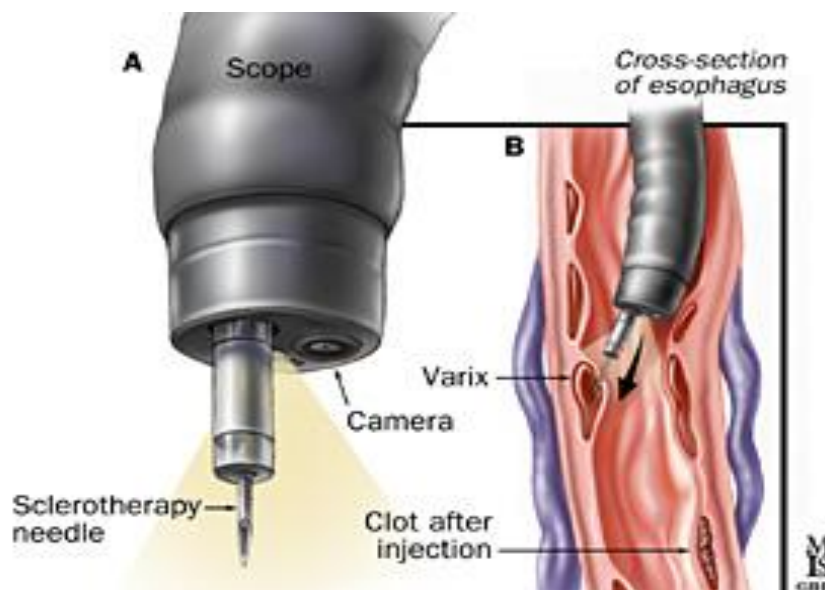
Tratamiento endoscópico de las várices esofágicas

Dentro de los métodos endoscópicos, para las várices esofágicas se utiliza la inyección de sustancias esclerosantes mediante uso de endoscopios en visión directa, o la ligadura de las várices usando bandas elásticas transportadas por endoscopia (12-22).

Escleroterapia endoscópica

La escleroterapia fue revolucionaria en el tiempo que se introdujo, ya que logró por primera vez el dominar un problema que antes ocasionaba la muerte de casi todos los pacientes que la presentaban. Fue descrita por primera vez en 1939 por Freckner y Crafoord), pero solo tuvo impacto cuando los endoscopios de fibra óptica estuvieron disponibles a finales de los años 80`s (figura 4). La relativa facilidad de su uso, la utilización de sustancias derivadas de alcohol capaces de producir la esclerosis de las várices, disponibles usualmente a bajo costo, hicieron de este método una herramienta eficaz (23,24), al punto que en muchas unidades de endoscopia alrededor del mundo aún se utilizan, y muchas de las guías clínicas actuales recomiendan su uso, ya sea de manera paralela a la ligadura, cuando no se cuenta con esta, o de manera complementaria en casos particulares. Los compuestos que se han o se usan son el oleato de etanolamina al 5%, el sulfato de tetradecil sódico (25) al 1%, el polidocanol al 0.5% (26) y el alcohol absoluto (27). De manera habitual se utilizan 2 mL de esclerosante por cada inyección, y los volúmenes totales suelen estar en el rango de 10 a 15 mL, aunque la cantidad es tema de controversia. La técnica requiere de personal de endoscopia experto, tanto en el endoscopista como en el personal de enfermería y auxiliar. Los problemas de esta técnica son la falla en controlar el sangrado, lo que ocurre con cierta frecuencia, y sus efectos colaterales, dentro de los que se describen la perforación del esófago, las ulceraciones extensas, estenosis posterior y aparición de fístulas (28).

Figura 4.- Esquema de la esclerosis endoscópica de várices esofágicas



Ligadura de várices con bandas elásticas

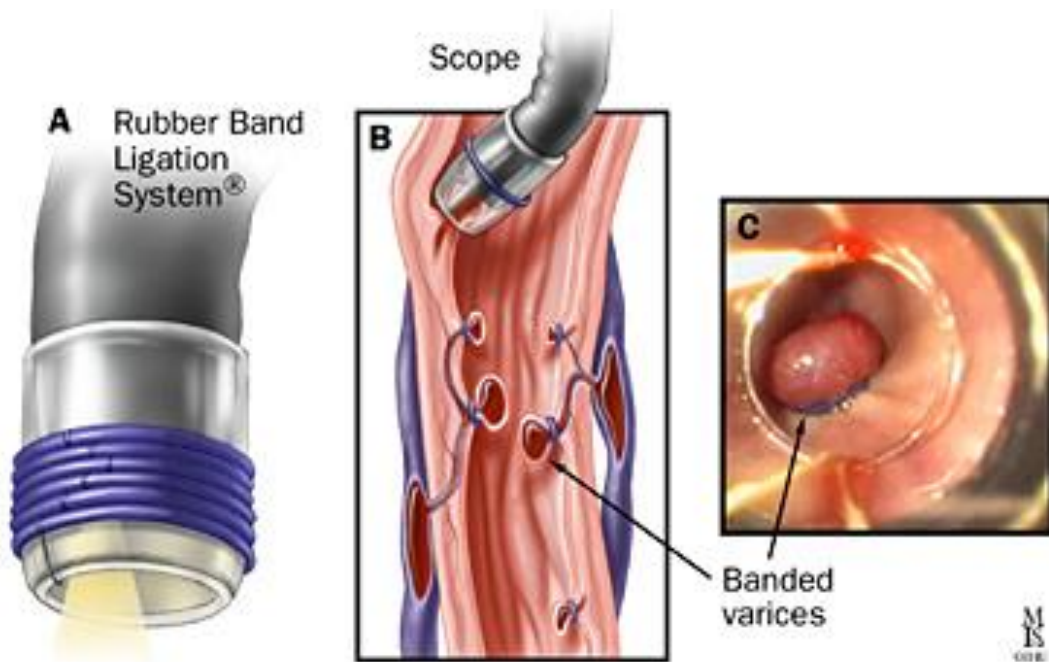
La ligadura endoscópica fue introducida por primera vez por Stiegmann en 1986 (29,30), el que describió la colocación de bandas elásticas en las várices esofágicas de manera similar al procedimiento utilizado en el tratamiento de hemorroides. Inicialmente se utilizaba un sistema de transporte y liberación de ligadura de una sola banda y se debían realizar múltiples endoscopías para colocar la cantidad de ligaduras necesarias para el número de várices que el paciente presentara. Este sistema era muy incómodo y hasta cierto punto riesgoso para el paciente, muy trabajoso para el endoscopista que debía montar el sistema repetidamente, y durante mucho tiempo fue dañino para el equipo, que sufría desgaste y daño con las colocaciones repetidas del sistema de transporte y liberación de las bandas. Posteriormente, se desarrolló la técnica de colocar un sobre tubo al endoscopio, que permitía la introducción repetida del instrumento sin las molestias propias de la endoscopia y sin el riesgo de aspiración, a pesar de que se mantenía molestia por la presencia del sobre tubo instalado por tiempos largos y algunas complicaciones por su uso. Todas estas dificultades desalentaron al método, y por muchos años su uso fue limitado. Posteriormente se inventó el sistema de cabezal de transporte y liberación de múltiples elásticos, que permite la colocación de 4 a 10 o más bandas elásticas dentro de un solo procedimiento (figura 5), y con el desarrollo de materiales blandos, que no hacen daño a los equipos, el sistema se popularizó rápidamente. El método ha sido descrito en detalle, requiere personal entrenado y experiencia (29,30), cuya curva de aprendizaje suele ser de meses o años. Una vez ligados los vasos venosos se produce necrosis isquémica, trombosis y fibrosis, con la consecuente erradicación de las várices.

Luego de un tiempo de efectuada la ligadura, (usualmente 2 – 3 semanas) un porcentaje del 5 al 10% los pacientes ligados pueden presentar una hemorragia alta que se detiene espontáneamente cuando las várices trombosadas se desprenden, y queda una escara que puede sangrar. Si la escara está en contacto con otras várices (lo que puede suceder en las várices grandes, usualmente gástricas), este nuevo episodio de sangrado es mayor y puede amenazar la vida. Otros efectos colaterales de la ligadura como la ulceración y la estenosis del esófago son menores que la esclerosis, y existen técnicas de colocación de los elásticos que permiten disminuirlas al mínimo.

Durante mucho tiempo el principal escollo de las ligaduras fue el precio de los sistemas de transporte y liberación, que podían ser de hasta unos 750 dólares por equipo, agregados al precio del procedimiento, lo que impidió que muchos centros en el mundo pudieran utilizarlo de rutina. En nuestro servicio (como en muchos otros), se desarrollaron sistemas caseros de montaje de las bandas elásticas, que permitían usar varias veces los cabezales y el sistema de tracción, los que también se podían fabricar de manera artesanal. A partir de año 2005 en nuestro servicio utilizamos estos sistemas de múltiples usos por varios años (lo que nos permitía tratar eficazmente y a bajo costo a los pacientes, pero que nos impedía realizar estudios controlados como

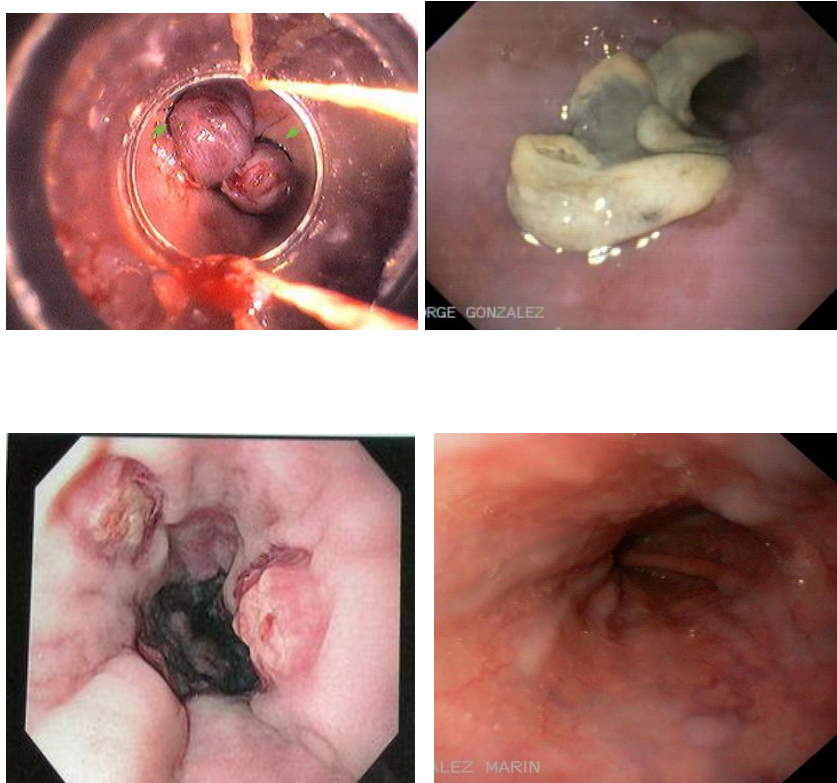
un ensayo clínico). Posteriormente la baja del costo de los sistemas comerciales y el mejoramiento económico del sistema de salud y la cobertura actual que realizan los seguros de salud a este método, nos han permitido la utilización de sistemas originales de manera desechable.

Figura 5.- Esquema del tratamiento endoscópico por ligaduras elásticas de las vórices esofágicas.



Tanto la esclerosis como la ligadura han demostrado utilidad en la detención de la hemorragia activa, aunque es aún controversial su efecto comparativo en los episodios de re-sangrado y la mortalidad a mediano plazo. Existen una serie de ventajas de la ligadura sobre la esclerosis, pero aún no se cuenta con evidencia concluyente en todos los objetivos deseados (31-36). En muchas de las guías clínicas actuales de manejo de la hemorragia por vórices, se recomiendan ambas por igual. Las vórices correctamente tratadas por ambos métodos pueden tener una evolución favorable hasta desaparecer (figura 6).

Figura 6.- Secuencia de caso real de evolución de várices esofágicas tratadas mediante ligadura endoscópica (ligadura, trombosis, escaras, curación)



Tratamiento endoscópico de las várices gástricas

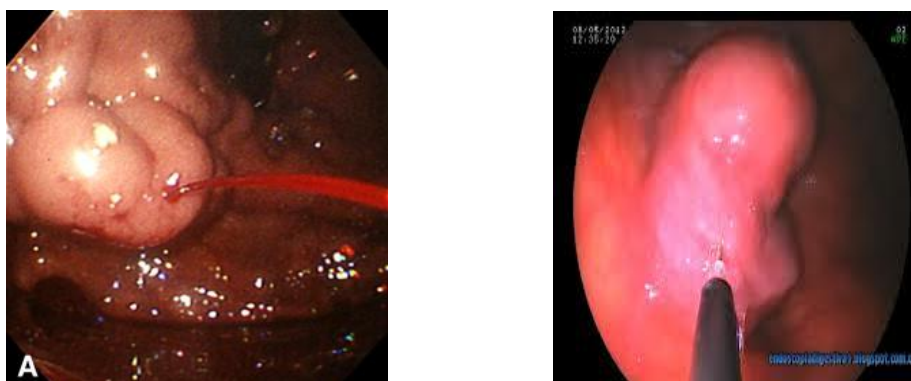
El tratamiento endoscópico de las várices gástricas está menos desarrollado que las esofágicas, y los métodos utilizados comprenden la inyección de diversos esclerosantes (el más promisorio de los cuales es el cianoacrilato (N-Butil-2 cianoacrilato) (figura 7), además de otros varios esclerosantes de efectividad variable, la ligadura endoscópica tradicional y la ligadura con lazo. (37-39).

El uso de cianoacrilato fue reportado por Lunderquist et al en 1978 (37), usando una vía de acceso trans hepática. El primer uso mediante endoscopio fue reportado por Gotlib y Zimmermann (38). Soehendra et al reportaron las primeras aplicaciones para el control del sangrado por várices gástricas (39). La escleroterapia con cianoacrilato consiste en la inyección dentro de la vena de un adhesivo en forma líquida, que se polimeriza en segundos con el contacto de la sangre formando un plástico sólido que obtura la cavidad venosa, causando edema y compresión mecánica seguida de inflamación, trombosis variceal y fibrosis, todo lo cual lleva a la obliteración de la vena (42-48). Su degradación ocurre por hidrólisis en pequeños oligómeros y produce formaldehído que ocasiona toxicidad. Presenta algunos efectos colaterales como el dolor torácico, la disfagia (usualmente transitoria), fiebre, bacteremia y pequeños derrames pleurales (49). Su más temida complicación es la embolia del cianoacrilato por paso hasta órganos distales como el pulmón o el cerebro,

que puede ser mortal. Este tipo de complicación, que ha sido descrita en varios trabajos (50-56), ha impedido que este tratamiento se popularice en todo el mundo, existiendo países como los EEUU, que aún no permiten su uso (aunque un agente similar el 2-octyl-cianoacrilato ha sido aprobado por la FDA para cierres de heridas en la piel y está siendo utilizado para las várices gástricas) (57). Por otro lado, el uso del cianoacrilato tiene dificultades técnicas derivadas de la rapidez de su solidificación, que pueden causar daños serios al equipo endoscópico, y ocasionalmente la aparición de un puente sólido entre el endoscopio y la varice, cuyo manejo requiere de un endoscopista experto para evitar desgarros de la varice potencialmente fatales. El uso del cianoacrilato se realiza a traves de un endoscopio de vista frontal, con la punta lubricada con silicona, e inyectado dentro de la varice usando una aguja endoscopica de 21 F. Usualmente se utilizan dosis de 0.5 a 1 mL de cianoacrilato mezclado con una alicuota similar de lipiodol, el que es utilizado como agente lubricante y como marcador radio opaco, lo que permite visualizar por rayos X tomada posteriormente el deposito efectivo del cianoacrilato dentro de la varices y controlar que no haya migrado a otros rganos. Una vez realizada la inyeccion es posible palpar el cambio de consistencia de la varice de blanda a solida usando la aguja de inyeccion con la punta retraida, para comprobar el xito del procedimiento.

El uso del cianoacrilato ha sido comparado tanto en estudios observacionales como ensayos clnicos contra beta bloqueadores (58,59), contra la esclerosis endoscopica (mostrando en general ventajas pero con algunas inconsistencias) (60-66) y contra la ligadura endoscopica de varices gastricas, trabajos que muestran resultados mixtos y son los que justifican este trabajo de tesis (67-69).

Figura 7.- Secuencia de sangrado y esclerosis con cianoacrilato en várices gástricas.



Otros métodos endoscópicos de tratamiento de várices gástricas son: la esclerosis con sustancias como el sulfato de tetradecil, y compuestos de alcohol, que tienen tasas de control de sangrado reportadamente menores (67 – 100%), y que además presentan recidiva del sangrado hasta en el 90% de los casos, con complicaciones importantes y a veces mortales como la ulceración, perforación y mediastinitis (60-66). Otras sustancias esclerosantes son la trombina, un agente hemostático que ayuda a convertir el fibrinógeno en coágulo de fibrina además de tener efectos de agregación plaquetaria. Se deriva en polvo desde donadores de plasma humanos, y una vez reconstituida es inyectada en alícuotas de 1 mL a través de un endoscopio de vista frontal y una aguja de esclerosis. La dosis total inyectada suele variar entre 1500 a 2000 U. La trombina tiene reportes prometedores en series de casos con buenos resultados en el control de la hemorragia aunque cifras de hasta el 50% de recidiva del sangrado (81,82). Si bien la trombina no produce daño tisular en el sitio de inyección y por lo tanto teóricamente no debería producir re-sangrado por esta causa, en la práctica lo produce, lo que unido al costo elevado, pone limitaciones importantes a su uso. El uso de Loop Ligation, o asas grandes de lazo para efectuar ligaduras más amplias ha sido utilizada con éxito en várices gástricas grandes, y consiste en el mismo principio que la ligadura, pero usando sistemas de lazo, de mayor tamaño y que abarcan toda la base de la várice. Este sistema no cuenta con ningún ensayo clínico controlado y solo con series de casos pequeñas (83-86).

El presente trabajo de tesis se estructurará en trabajos separados que comprenden un trabajo de campo para contribuir a la evidencia de la efectividad de la ligadura endoscópica versus la esclerosis en las várices esofágicas, una revisión sistemática de la literatura para contribuir con la evidencia de la eficacia de la inyección de cianoacrilato versus otros métodos endoscópicos en las várices gástricas, y una evaluación de guías clínicas que traten el tema del tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices de esófago y/o estómago.

Revisiones sistemáticas y guías de práctica clínica

Revisiones sistemáticas.- Las revisiones sistemáticas de la literatura de ensayos clínicos controlados aleatorios con grados aceptables de homogeneidad son los diseños de investigación que aportan la mejor calidad de evidencia, y la mejor fuerza de recomendación (grado de recomendación A, nivel de evidencia 1a) (87,88), ya que son capaces de sintetizar de manera sistemática y reproducible toda la información disponible sobre una pregunta de salud concreta, y evaluar críticamente su contenido, obteniendo una integración de sus datos que representan al total de los pacientes estudiados en los trabajos individuales, aumentando por ende su poder estadístico.

El propósito de las revisiones sistemáticas es minimizar los posibles sesgos producidos en los ensayos clínicos individuales mediante la aplicación de métodos sistemáticos y explícitos, cumpliendo con criterios de elegibilidad previamente establecidos proporcionando resultados más confiables (88,89). El meta análisis es la aplicación de métodos estadísticos para combinar y resumir los resultados de varios estudios realizados sobre el mismo tema, que contestan una sola pregunta y que son independientes entre sí. Este método, cuando se cumplen las condiciones para realizarlo, provee estimaciones más precisas sobre los efectos de las intervenciones, que aquellas derivadas de los estudios individuales que las componen (90-108). Las revisiones sistemáticas son consideradas la mejor fuente de información para la toma de decisiones en salud y constituyen la base para la realización de las guías de práctica clínica.

Guías de práctica clínica (GPC's).- Las GP's se definen como el conjunto de recomendaciones desarrolladas de manera sistemática con el objetivo de guiar a los profesionales y a los pacientes en el proceso de la toma de decisiones sobre qué intervenciones sanitarias son más adecuadas en el abordaje de una condición clínica específica, en circunstancias sanitarias concretas (109). Las GPC's tienen como objetivo ayudar a los profesionales a asimilar, evaluar e implementar la cada vez mayor cantidad de evidencia científica disponible y las opiniones basadas en la mejor práctica clínica. El propósito de formular recomendaciones explícitas es influir en la práctica clínica, por lo que éstas han de tener validez tanto interna como externa (110). Una GPC comúnmente se desarrolla como una serie de revisiones sistemáticas que van dando la mejor respuesta basadas en evidencia, a una serie de preguntas relacionadas con un problema de salud concreto.

Se espera que las guías de práctica clínica estén realizadas de la manera más rigurosa y sistemática, y sean basadas en la mejor evidencia posible. Idealmente deberían estar basadas en ensayos clínicos controlados y revisiones sistemáticas de ensayos clínicos (aunque pueden realizarse sobre cualquier otro diseño) ya que estos son los mejores para identificar y sintetizar la evidencia sobre la eficacia de las

intervenciones sanitarias. En la última década, y en especial desde la publicación del instrumento AGREE (Appraisal of Guidelines Research and Evaluation) (134,135) el rigor metodológico y la calidad en la elaboración de las GPC ha mejorado. A nivel internacional diversos organismos como la Red Escocesa Intercolegiada sobre Guías de Práctica Clínica (Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network, SIGN) y el Instituto Nacional para la Excelencia Clínica del Reino Unido (National Institute for Clinical Excellence, NICE) se han dedicado a desarrollar GPC basadas en la evidencia científica. En España, se están elaborando GPC de mejor calidad, pero las guías realizadas con metodología sistemática, rigurosa y basada en la mejor evidencia aún son escasas. Los trabajos de evaluación de guías realizadas de diversas áreas del conocimiento han demostrado que la calidad no siempre es la ideal (111-114). Muchos de estos trabajos de evaluación de guías clínicas en diversos temas han demostrado serias deficiencias, ya sea por falta de rigurosidad en su elaboración, fallas en alcance y objetivos, deficiencias en la presentación de la guía, en su aplicabilidad o conflictos de intereses en su publicación. Muchas guías encontradas en la literatura se basan en otras guías, y estas a su vez pueden tener deficiencias en su elaboración. Otras guías presentadas como basadas en la evidencia, no tienen en realidad un trabajo metodológico en la búsqueda y evaluación de la mejor evidencia posible que justifique esta afirmación.

En el tema de la hemorragia variceal, existen muchas guías de práctica clínica, algunas con las fallas mencionadas anteriormente (115-131) y otras de aparente buena calidad (132,133), y al momento de plantearse la realización de esta tesis no existía un trabajo de evaluación sistemática de estas. Por otro lado, las guías existentes en el tema tienen recomendaciones similares para tratamientos diferentes, lo que puede tener profundas implicaciones al momento de su aplicación. Es por ello que, para conocer en profundidad la calidad de las guías disponibles se propuso realizar un trabajo de evaluación, utilizando instrumentos confiables y estandarizados como el AGREE (tabla N 4) (134,135).

2.2. Justificación del trabajo de tesis

La unidad temática de este trabajo de tesis doctoral se justifica por la identificación de lagunas del conocimiento tanto universales como locales en el tema elegido y la necesidad de disponer tanto de evidencia de calidad para la recomendación de las mejores terapias, como de herramientas que permitan la toma de las mejores decisiones para el manejo de la hemorragia por várices de esófago o estómago. Un avance en estos temas puede tener un impacto importante en el tratamiento de estas patologías, y por consiguiente en el bienestar y la vida de los pacientes que las sufren.

La justificación de la propuesta se basa en tres premisas

1.- El tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices esofágicas con ligadura endoscópica es un procedimiento que se hizo práctico con el desarrollo de los sistemas de transporte y liberación de numerosos elásticos, y que ha demostrado ser un avance importante en el control del sangrado por várices esofágicas y sus complicaciones. En este momento es el tratamiento de elección frente al método anterior de esclerosis endoscópica con compuestos en base a alcohol, pero existe literatura que aún plantea dudas de su rendimiento en la prevención de los nuevos episodios de sangrado una vez detenido el primer episodio de sangrado y variabilidad de la mortalidad a mediano plazo. Estas dudas se han trasladado a varias de las guías clínicas que tratan el tema de hemorragia variceal y que recomiendan ambos métodos por igual para las várices esofágicas, lo que tiene una serie de implicaciones prácticas y administrativas, además de los posibles efectos en la salud de los pacientes.

Para contribuir a dilucidar estas dudas, hemos realizado un trabajo de campo en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez Aravena y la Clínica Alemana (ambos situados en Temuco, Chile) que pretende contribuir con el conocimiento actual y estudiar la hipótesis de que la ligadura endoscópica de várices esofágicas presenta mejores resultados que la esclerosis endoscópica con compuestos de alcohol (que siguen siendo la técnica más usada en todo el mundo, por su costo y relativa facilidad de implementación), especialmente por presentar menor recurrencia de sangrado luego del tratamiento inicial, y una disminución de la mortalidad a mediano plazo debido a sangrado. Este trabajo tiene un diseño de cohortes, ya que nuestra realidad nos impidió realizar un ensayo clínico controlado, y sintetiza los resultados de la aplicación de ambos métodos, logrando reunir un número muestral importante comparativamente para este tipo de estudios y pretende demostrar con evidencia de calidad aceptable la justificación de la adquisición de los insumos necesarios y el desarrollo de la experiencia para su correcta aplicación con el propósito final de contribuir a la salud de la población afectada.

2.- El tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices gástricas con esclerosis endoscópica utilizando cianoacrilato es un procedimiento relativamente nuevo, que está demostrando su utilidad y ventajas frente a los procedimientos usados anteriormente como la esclerosis con compuestos de alcohol y la ligadura con bandas elásticas. Existen muchos trabajos que muestran que su rendimiento es superior o al menos similar, comparado con las ligaduras elásticas, pero también existe preocupación por un potencial efecto colateral de mucha gravedad, como es la embolia por cianoacrilato en órganos distantes. Esta última preocupación ha impedido que este método sea aceptado en países como los EEUU, aunque su uso se permite en muchas partes del mundo. Las guías clínicas que tratan del tema lo recomiendan con precaución por estos posibles efectos y porque aún no están clara sus ventajas comparativas frente a otros métodos.

Para contribuir a dilucidar estas dudas hemos realizado una revisión sistemática de la literatura con metodología Cochrane, que pretende contribuir con el conocimiento universal, en el sentido de aportar con la mejor evidencia posible de los resultados del tratamiento con esclerosis endoscópica con cianoacrilato comparándolo con la esclerosis endoscópica con otros compuestos y con la ligadura endoscópica de várices gástricas. Pretende demostrar también la mejor evidencia de la real magnitud de sus complicaciones, justificando o no la adquisición de los insumos necesarios y la experiencia para su correcta aplicación con el propósito final de contribuir a la salud de la población afectada.

3.- Las guías clínicas son una herramienta fundamental en la toma de decisiones, y se espera que estén elaboradas de acuerdo a los más altos estándares de calidad científica. Sin embargo, la mayoría de los trabajos que evalúan la calidad de las guías clínicas en diferentes temas y que usan herramientas estandarizadas y sistemáticas como el AGREE, han demostrado que este no es el caso en una importante proporción, y que existen pocas guías que alcanzan niveles aceptables de calidad en su desarrollo e implementación. A la fecha no se ha publicado una evaluación de las guías de práctica clínica en el tema de la hemorragia por várices esófago gástricas (HV), ni se ha realizado un análisis de su contenido.

Para contribuir al conocimiento de la calidad de las guías de práctica clínica en el tratamiento endoscópico de las várices de esófago y estómago y permitir conocer las bases sobre las que se elaboran aquellas guías actualmente disponibles y por ende su calidad, se ha realizado una evaluación de guías de práctica clínica en el tema planteado. Esta evaluación también permitirá conocer un resumen de las recomendaciones, y por lo tanto, poder contribuir con los dos trabajos anteriores a la actualización de las guías, si este fuera el caso.

Un adecuado análisis de las guías clínicas existentes permitirá a los usuarios poder escoger aquellas que permitan la toma de las mejores decisiones, además de poder contribuir con conocimientos o con evidencia a que sus contenidos sean de la mejor calidad posible, y por lo tanto que lo que se traslade a la práctica tenga los mejores fundamentos.

Los resultados integrados de los tres trabajos pueden significar mejoras sustantivas en aspectos puntuales del tratamiento de la hemorragia variceal, pueden completar el conocimiento en áreas específicas donde existen dudas actualmente, y podrían tener un impacto importante en la práctica diaria, permitiendo optimizar el tratamiento del sangrado de várices de esófago y estómago, que usualmente se presenta en ámbito de urgencia con peligro claro de la vida de los que la sufren, además de tener otras repercusiones prácticas de tipo administrativo, como la compra de equipos e insumos y el entrenamiento requerido por el personal que atiende esta patología.

3. OBJETIVOS

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Los objetivos que se plantean a continuación pretenden dar respuesta a cada una de las publicaciones que la conforman, y que plantean las siguientes preguntas de investigación:

1.- ¿Cuál es la eficacia de los tratamientos endoscópicos por ligaduras elásticas comparado con la esclerosis endoscópica de las várices esofágicas sangrantes, y por inyección de cianoacrilato comparado con otros métodos endoscópicos en las várices gástricas?

2.- ¿Cuál es el resultado de la evaluación de las guías clínicas que tratan del tema de tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices de esófago o estómago (HV), de acuerdo al instrumento AGREE?

OBJETIVOS GENERALES

1.- Determinar la efectividad de la ligadura endoscópica versus la esclerosis endoscópica en el sangrado agudo de várices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco en pacientes con hipertensión portal, mediante un diseño de estudio de cohorte.

2.- Determinar la efectividad de la escleroterapia con cianoacrilato versus otros procedimientos endoscópicos para el sangrado agudo de várices gástricas en pacientes con hipertensión portal, mediante la revisión sistemática y meta análisis de los ensayos clínicos controlados y aleatorizados realizados sobre el tema.

3.- Evaluar de forma sistemática la calidad de las guías de práctica clínica disponibles para tratamiento de la hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices de esófago y de estómago sangrantes.

4. METODOLOGIA

4. METODOLOGIA:

La metodología del trabajo de tesis es la propia de cada uno de los artículos que la conforman. Se presentan solo los métodos resumidos, ya que la versión completa está descrita en cada uno de los artículos.

Trabajo 1.-

Determinar la efectividad de la ligadura de várices esofágicas vs la esclerosis endoscópica en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco en pacientes con hipertensión portal

Objetivos específicos:

- Evaluar la efectividad de la ligadura endoscópica comparada con la esclerosis endoscópica, para controlar la hemorragia en pacientes con sangrado agudo de várices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco, Chile
- Evaluar su efectividad en prevenir un nuevo episodio de sangrado, una vez detenido el primero, con ambos tratamientos
- Evaluar la mortalidad a mediano plazo de ambos tratamientos

Población de estudio:

- Pacientes: Seguimiento de todos los pacientes con hipertensión portal con várices de esófago sangrantes y no sangrantes atendidos en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco en un periodo de 20 años.

Métodos:

- Tres cohortes de pacientes con várices esofágicas estudiadas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez fueron reunidas en un periodo de 20 años con seguimiento medio de 2.5 años. Una cohorte de 54 pacientes con hemorragia aguda de várices tratadas con esclerosis endoscópica, otra de 90 pacientes similares tratados con ligadura endoscópica y una tercera de 133 pacientes con várices no sangrantes sin tratamiento endoscópico. Los datos fueron recolectados retrospectivamente para la cohorte de esclerosis y parte de la cohorte sin tratamiento endoscópico, y prospectivamente para la cohorte de ligadura y parte de la cohorte sin tratamiento endoscópico.

Las cohortes fueron comparadas para evaluar la eficacia de la detención de la hemorragia, el re sangrado y la mortalidad a mediano plazo.

Análisis:

- La base de datos se construyó mediante códigos planificados a este objeto y que se mantuvieron estables durante todo el estudio. Las comparaciones de variables cualitativas se realizaron con el test de X² y el test de t de Student o U test de Mann-Whitney, de acuerdo al caso. Las cohortes fueron analizadas con análisis de riesgo relativo con intervalos de confianza, diferencia de riesgos y número necesario a tratar. Los análisis de sobrevida fueron realizados de acuerdo a la técnica de Kaplan exacto de Fisher. Las variables cuantitativas fueron comparadas con análisis Meier. Para el análisis multivariado se realizó una modelo de regresión logística.

TRABAJO 2.-

Determinar la efectividad de la escleroterapia con cianoacrilato vs otros procedimientos endoscópicos para el sangrado agudo de vórices gástricas en pacientes con hipertensión portal.

Objetivos específicos:

- Revisar sistemáticamente la evidencia disponible en ensayos clínicos aleatorizados que evalúen el efecto de la escleroterapia con cianoacrilato en sangrado agudo por vórices gástricas comparado con otros esclerosantes y con ligaduras elásticas en pacientes con hipertensión portal.
- Evaluar la calidad de los ensayos clínicos aleatorizados identificados.
- Estimar una medida de resumen de la efectividad del tratamiento endoscópico con cianoacrilato comparado con otros esclerosantes o con ligaduras endoscópicas.

Metodología:

Etapa de búsqueda:

- Se realizaron búsquedas sistemáticas en las bases electrónicas (The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Controlled Trials Register; The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials in The Cochrane Library; MEDLINE; and EMBASE) de acuerdo a una estrategia determinada, con palabras claves, criterios de inclusión y exclusión de estudios. Búsqueda manual, referencias

de artículos, y contactos con autores. Se contó con el apoyo especializado de búsqueda del grupo Hepato Biliar de la Cochrane.

Criterios de elección de estudios primarios:

Ensayos clínicos aleatorizados

- Pacientes: Sujetos con hipertensión portal con sangrado agudo de várices gástricas.
- Intervención: Escleroterapia con cianoacrilato, escleroterapia con otros esclerosantes y ligadura endoscópicas.
- Resultados: Control del sangramiento; falla del procedimiento, nuevo episodio de sangrado una vez detenido el primero, mortalidad, complicaciones y cuando fuera posible obliteración, uso de drogas vaso activas y número de transfusiones de glóbulos rojos.

Extracción de datos:

- Dos revisores de manera ciega e independiente. Los desacuerdos fueron solucionados por consenso o por un tercer revisor.

Evaluación de calidad:

- De acuerdo a métodos de aleatorización y control de sesgos, secuencia, enmascaramiento, ciegos, seguimiento e intención a tratar. Los trabajos fueron calificados de acuerdo a sus sesgos (93-100).

Análisis estadístico:

- Evaluación de heterogeneidad, cálculo de medida de resumen (riesgo relativo), con integración de datos en meta análisis usando el software de RevMan (90), para cada una de las comparaciones logradas y cada uno de los resultados. Análisis de subgrupos de acuerdo al uso de drogas vaso activas concomitantes, la gravedad de la lesión de base, tipo de várices, tipo de presentación del sangrado, calidad de los ensayos (alto riesgo de sesgo vs bajo riesgo de sesgo) y artículos en full o resúmenes. Cálculos de meta-análisis usando el método de Random-error, cálculo secuencial de ensayos clínicos para la evaluación de la precisión de los resultados (90-105) y resumen de la evidencia usando la herramienta GRADE (107,108).

TRABAJO 3.-

Evaluar la calidad de las guías de práctica clínica disponibles para tratamiento de la hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices de esófago y estómago sangrantes.

Objetivos específicos:

- Búsqueda de guías clínicas que traten el tema de la hemorragia variceal en la literatura universal con estrategias definidas y sistemáticas.
- Identificación de las Guías Clínicas de tratamiento de hemorragia variceal que cumplan con los criterios de inclusión.
- Evaluación de las guías de acuerdo a los ítems del instrumento AGREE (134,135) (Tabla 9).
- Análisis de los tratamientos propuestos respecto al tratamiento endoscópico de hemorragia variceal, sintetizando los niveles de evidencia y fuerza de la recomendación.
- Diseño de estrategia de búsqueda de la literatura para identificar guías clínicas que traten del tema en bases de datos disponibles, generales, bases de datos específicas para GPC, sitios de gastroenterología como la World Gastroenterology Organization, literatura gris y otros.
- Evaluación de las guías para el cumplimiento con los criterios AGREE, en una base de datos especialmente preparada. Tres evaluadores independientes con una estrategia definida para la calificación y la resolución de desacuerdos.
- Análisis de las guías que cumplan con los criterios, en sus partes pertinentes a la hemorragia variceal.

Análisis:

- Los resultados sobre las recomendaciones se presentaron de forma descriptiva, de acuerdo al nivel de evidencia, y la calidad de los mismos. Se reportaron los niveles de acuerdo entre los evaluadores mediante el índice de correlación intra clase (ICC) y sus intervalos de confianza. La evaluación de las guías en los ítems correspondientes fueron calculadas de acuerdo al método propuesto por el instrumento AGREE (134,135).
- Se estableció un promedio ponderado del 70% (estandarización de la puntuación total como un porcentaje sobre la máxima puntuación) para establecer la proporción de guías que obtenían puntuaciones por encima de este nivel para cada dominio y como puntaje total.

Tabla 9.- Instrumento AGREE

Scope and purpose (items 1–3):

1. The overall objective(s) of the guideline is (are) specifically described
2. The clinical question(s) covered by the guideline is (are) specifically described
3. The patients to whom the guideline is meant to apply are specifically described

Stakeholder involvement (items 4–7):

4. The guideline development group includes individuals from all the relevant professional groups
5. Patient views and preferences have been sought
6. The target users of the guideline are clearly defined
7. The guideline has been piloted among target users

Rigour of development (items 8–14):

8. Systematic methods were used to search for evidence
9. The criteria for selecting the evidence are clearly described
10. The methods used for formulating the recommendations are clearly described
11. The health benefits, side effects and risks have been considered in formulating the recommendations
12. There is an explicit link between the recommendations and the supporting evidence
13. The guideline has been externally reviewed by experts prior to its publication
14. A procedure for updating the guideline is provided

Clarity and presentation (items 15–18):

15. The recommendations are specific and unambiguous
16. The different options for management of the condition are clearly presented
17. Key recommendations are easily identifiable
18. The guideline is supported by tools for application

Applicability (items 19–21):

19. The potential organizational barriers in applying the recommendations have been discussed
20. The potential cost implications of applying the recommendations have been considered
21. The guideline presents key review criteria for monitoring and/or audit purposes

Editorial independence (items 22–23):

22. The guideline is editorially independent from the funding body
23. Conflicts of interest of guideline development members have been recorded

AGREE = Appraisal of Guidelines, Research and Evaluation

RESULTADOS

5. RESULTADOS

Trabajos presentados para responder a los objetivos de este trabajo de tesis:

1.-Determinar la efectividad de la ligadura de várices esofágicas vs la esclerosis endoscópica en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco en pacientes con hipertensión portal: Estudio original de cohortes comparativas.

- **Eddy Ríos, Armando Sierralta, Marigraciela Abarzúa, Joaquín Bastías, María Inés Barra. Comparación de la efectividad de la ligadura vs esclerosis endoscópica en pacientes con sangrado de várices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco: estudio de cohortes comparativas. Rev Med Chile 2012; 140: 713-718.**

2.- Determinar la efectividad de la escleroterapia con cianoacrilato vs otros procedimientos endoscópicos para el sangrado agudo de várices gástricas en pacientes con hipertensión portal. Revisión sistemática de la literatura.

- **Eddy Ríos Castellanos, Pamela Seron, Javier P Gisbert, Xavier Bonfill Cosp. Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2012, Issue 10. Art. Nº.: CD010180. DOL: 10.1002/14651858. CD010180**

3.- Evaluar la calidad de las guías de práctica clínica disponibles para tratamiento de la hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices esófago - gástricas sangrantes. Estudio de evaluación de guías clínicas.

- **E. Ríos; P. Serón ; F. Lanás ; X. Bonfill ; Quigley MM E; P. Alonso-Coello. Evaluation of the quality of clinical practice guidelines for the management of esophageal or gastric variceal bleeding. European Journal of Gastroenterology & Hepatology 2014, Vol 25 Nº 4: 422-431**

ARTICULOS COMPLETOS

ARTICULO 1

Comparación de la efectividad de la ligadura vs esclerosis endoscópica en pacientes con sangrado de várices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco: estudio de cohortes comparativas

Eddy Ríos, Armando Sierralta, Marigraciela Abarzúa, Joaquín Bastías, María Inés Barra. Rev Med Chile 2012; 140: 713-718.

Factor de impacto (2011): 0.370

Comparación de la efectividad de la ligadura vs esclerosis endoscópica en pacientes con sangrado de várices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco: estudio de cohortes comparativas

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Comparison of band ligation with sclerotherapy for the treatment of bleeding esophageal varices

Background: Endoscopic band ligation is the treatment of choice for bleeding esophageal varices. However it is not clear if this procedure is associated with less early and late mortality than sclerotherapy. **Aim:** To assess rates of re-bleeding and mortality in cohorts of patients with bleeding esophageal varices treated with endoscopic injection or band ligation. **Patients and Methods:** Analysis of medical records and endoscopy reports of two cohorts of patients with bleeding esophageal varices, treated between 1990 and 2010. Of these, 54 patients were treated with sclerotherapy and 90 patients with band ligation. A third cohort of 116 patients that did not require endoscopic treatment was included. The mean analyzed follow up period was 2.5 years (range 1-16). Collection of data was retrospective for patients treated with sclerotherapy and prospective for patients treated with band ligation. Rates of re-bleeding and medium term mortality were assessed. **Results:** During the month ensuing the first endoscopic treatment, re-bleeding was recorded in 39 and 72% of patients treated with band ligation and sclerotherapy, respectively ($p < 0.01$). The relative risk of bleeding after band ligation was 0.53 (95% confidence limits 0.39-0.73). Death rates until the end of follow up were 20 and 48% among patients with treated with band ligation and sclerotherapy, respectively ($p < 0.01$), with a relative risk of dying for patients subjected to band ligation of 0.41 (95% confidence limits 0.25-0.68). **Conclusion:** Band ligation was associated with lower rate of re-bleeding and mortality in these cohorts of patients.

(Rev Med Chile 2012; 140: 713-718).

Key words: Esophageal and gastric varices, Hypertension, portal, Sclerotherapy.

La hemorragia digestiva alta (HDA) por ruptura de várices esofágicas continúa siendo una de las emergencias más dramáticas de la medicina interna. Hasta 30% de las personas con cirrosis desarrollan várices¹, entre 30% y 70% de estas sufren de una o más rupturas en el tiempo², ocasionando hemorragias con mortalidad de hasta 30% para el primer episodio, y en aumento en los

siguientes episodios³. La tasa de resangrado puede alcanzar de 30 al 40% en las primeras seis semanas⁴, y está significativamente relacionada con la mortalidad en este período⁵.

El tratamiento más efectivo fue la esclerosis endoscópica, usando derivados del alcohol⁶⁻⁸. En 1988 se describió la técnica de ligadura de várices⁹, la que se expande con el desarrollo de los equipos

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El trabajo se realizó con fondos propios.

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de ligaduras múltiples y se tiene capacidad de detener la hemorragia hasta en 90% de los casos^{21,22}.

La literatura en general reporta ventajas del uso de ligadura endoscópica frente a la esclerosis endoscópica en términos de detención de la hemorragia y una menor tasa de resangrado^{23,24}, pero las diferencias encontradas no son muy grandes, al punto que la mayoría de las guías recomiendan ambas técnicas indistintamente²⁵⁻²⁷ y existen datos escasos de los efectos a mediano y largo plazo. Una revisión sistemática Cochrane del tema se está realizando en el momento²⁸.

El objetivo de este trabajo fue contribuir a aclarar las ventajas o desventajas de un método sobre el otro, especialmente en términos de resangrado, y la mortalidad a mediano plazo de acuerdo a nuestra experiencia.

Material y Métodos

Doscientos sesenta pacientes fueron diagnosticados con vórices esofágicas entre 1990 y 2010, 144 de ellos presentaron hemorragia aguda por las vórices esofágicas. Todos fueron seguidos por tiempos variables, a partir del año 1990. El 10% de ellos se concentraron en la primera década y 90% entre los años 2000 y 2010. El seguimiento se realizó mediante el estudio de las fichas clínicas y los informes de endoscopia, usando una base de datos especialmente formulada. Las cohortes fueron históricas para el período 1990 al 2007, y concurrentes desde ese año hasta el 2010. El promedio de seguimiento por paciente individual fue de 2,5 años (rango 1-16 años).

Se confeccionaron dos cohortes: La primera con 54 pacientes con vórices esofágicas sangrantes tratadas con escleroterapia endoscópica (CE) y la segunda con 90 pacientes similares tratadas con ligadura endoscópica (CL). Los criterios de inclusión fueron todos los pacientes que se presentaron en el hospital con hemorragia aguda por vórices esofágicas sangrantes, que fueran tratadas ya sea con esclerosis o con ligaduras endoscópicas, y que tuvieran datos completos. Los criterios de exclusión fueron hemorragias por otras causas, prevención primaria o secundaria de vórices esofágicas con cualquier método endoscópico, o datos incompletos. Se realizó una tercera cohorte de comparación de 116 pacientes con vórices esofágicas que no necesitaron tratamiento endoscópico (CSTE), a fines de comparación. Una pequeña

porción de los pacientes tratados con esclerosis fueron tratados también con ligadura en los siguientes episodios de resangrado y sus datos se analizan tanto en conjunto como separadamente.

Se realizó un cálculo *post hoc* del poder del estudio. Entre las dos cohortes principales, CE y CL, suman 144 pacientes (1,6 ligadura por cada esclerosis), usando el *odds ratio* de 0,5 obtenido del metaanálisis de Laine²⁹ como diferencia teórica, los resultados se pueden leer con un error α de 0,05, y un error β de 0,20 (confiabilidad 95% y poder 80%). El poder aumenta en las comparaciones entre la CL y CSTE.

No se obtuvieron consentimientos informados, ya que las intervenciones fueron las normales para la patología específica y la recogida de datos retrospectiva. No se realizó ningún procedimiento diferente del habitual a causa de este estudio. Las intervenciones fueron realizadas por médicos endoscopistas experimentados de planta. Las esclerosis fueron realizadas con inyecciones intra o paravariaceales de monoetanolamina al 5%, en ampollas de 5 cc. Las ligaduras fueron realizadas con sistemas Cook Medical de 4, 6 ó 10 elásticos. Cada endoscopista decidió en su momento el método y el número de vórices intervenidas. Todos los pacientes fueron tratados posteriormente con propranolol, ajustando la dosis según frecuencia cardíaca. El resangrado fue definido como un nuevo episodio de HDA por vórices, dentro del mes siguiente. La mortalidad fue definida como estado vital del paciente al final del seguimiento (año 2010).

La base de datos se construyó mediante códigos que se mantuvieron estables durante todo el estudio. Para el análisis se usó el software Stata 9.0. Las variables cuantitativas se presentan con promedio, desviación estándar y rangos. Las comparaciones usan análisis de t de Student o U test de Mann-Whitney. Las variables discretas se presentan como números absolutos y porcentajes, usando el test de χ^2 y el test exacto de Fisher. Las cohortes fueron analizadas con análisis de riesgo relativo con intervalos de confianza, diferencia de riesgos y número necesario a tratar. Los análisis de sobrevida fueron realizados de acuerdo a la técnica de Kaplan Meier. Para el análisis multivariado se realizó un modelo de regresión de Cox utilizando la sobrevida como variable independiente, y las variables ligadura, esclerosis, edad, sexo, uso de propranolol, clasificación de Child (A y B+C) y sus interacciones en el modelo.

Resultados

Del grupo total de 260 pacientes, 80 fueron mujeres (31%) y 180 varones (69%), relación hombre/mujer de 2,2 a 1. El promedio de edad fue de 56,5 años (DE 13,57, rango 1 a 93 años). La causa de la cirrosis fue el consumo de alcohol en 145 casos (56,9%), cirrosis post hepatitis viral en 5 (2%), cirrosis autoinmunitaria en 12 (4,7%), y desconocida en 98 (38,4%) probablemente secundaria a esteatosis. De este total, 144 (55,3%) presentaron sangrado atribuible a las várices como primer diagnóstico mientras que 116 (44,7%) no lo presentaron y las várices fueron diagnosticadas como parte del estudio de su patología. Del total que sangraron, 84 (32,3%) sangraron en una sola oportunidad, mientras que 39 (15%) sangraron 2 veces, 21 (9,8%) tres veces, 11 (4,2%) 4 veces y porcentajes menores entre 5 y 12 veces. El grado de severidad en el primer diagnóstico fue de 157

pacientes (60,4%) en estadio Child A, 90 (34,6%) en estadio Child B y 13 (5%) en estadio Child C. La distribución y comparación de todas estas variables para ambas cohortes se muestran en la Tabla 1.

De los 144 pacientes que sangraron por várices en forma aguda, 54 (37,5%) fueron tratadas con esclerosis endoscópica con inyección de monoetanolamina (cohorte de esclerosis CE) y 90 (62,5%), fueron tratadas con ligadura elástica (cohorte de ligadura CL). Un tercer grupo de 116 pacientes no recibieron tratamiento endoscópico (cohorte sin intervención CSTE), ya sea porque las várices fueron diagnosticadas como parte del proceso diagnóstico en 82 (70,7%), o porque el sangrado fue de un origen distinto a las várices en 34 (29,3%).

Treinta y nueve de 54 (72%) pacientes de la CE tuvieron sangrado post procedimiento dentro del mes posterior a la intervención, comparados con

Tabla 1. Distribución de las variables género, edad, años de seguimiento, etiología y gravedad de las cohortes CE y CL.

Variable		Cohorte esclerosis (CE) n = 54	Cohorte ligadura (CL) n = 90	Comparación CE/CL
Género	Hombre	41 (75,9%)	64 (71,1%)	p = 0,5 NS
	Mujer	13 (24,9%)	26 (28,9%)	p = 0,52 NS
Edad	Años ($\bar{x} \pm DE$) (Rango)	55,2 \pm 14,8 (R 18-96)	54,9 \pm 13,6 (R 21-78)	p = 0,62 NS
Etiología	Alcohol	35 (64,8%)	53 (60,2%)	p = 0,46 NS
	Post hepatitis	3 (5,6%)	2 (2,3%)	p = 0,29 NS
	Auto inmunitaria	2 (3,7%)	7 (7,9%)	p = 0,32 NS
	Post esteatosis	14 (25,9%)	26 (29,5%)	p = 0,70 NS
Estadio	Child A	32 (59,2%)	49 (54,4%)	p = 0,57 NS
	Child B	21 (38,9%)	38 (42,2%)	p = 0,79 NS
	Child C	1 (1,8%)	3 (3,3%)	p = 0,60 NS
Seguimiento	Años ($\bar{x} \pm DE$) (Rango)	2,5 \pm 3 (R 1-12)	1,57 \pm 0,9 (R 1-5)	p = 0,006 5

35 de 90 (38,9%) pacientes de la CL ($p = 0,004$). El riesgo relativo de presentar sangrado luego de ligadura fue de 0,53 (IC 95% 0,39-0,73) comparado con esclerosis, lo que resulta en un NNT de 3 (se debe someter a 3 pacientes a ligadura en vez de esclerosis para evitar un episodio de re sangrado).

Veintiséis de 54 (48%) pacientes de la CE fallecieron al final del tiempo de seguimiento, 65% de hemorragia, 31% de otras complicaciones de la cirrosis y 4% de causas no relacionadas a la cirrosis, comparados con 18 de 90 pacientes (20%) en la CL, 40% de ellos por hemorragia y 60% de otras complicaciones de la cirrosis. El riesgo relativo de morir luego de ser sometido a ligadura es de 0,41 (IC 95% 0,25-0,68) comparado con la esclerosis, lo que resulta en un NNT de 3,5 (se debe someter a 3,5 pacientes a ligadura en vez de esclerosis para evitar una muerte). La CSTE tuvo 19 muertos de 116 pacientes (16,4%), 23% de hemorragia y 76% de otras causas.

Diecisiete pacientes que fueron tratados con esclerosis, y al volver a sangrar fueron tratados con ligadura, que ya estaba disponible en ese momento. Este grupo puede sesgar los resultados. Para aclarar la magnitud y la dirección del sesgo, el número se restó de ambas cohortes, ajustando a las intervenciones puras de ligadura o esclerosis. Este nuevo análisis muestra que en la CL de 14 de 73 (19%) pacientes habían muerto al final del seguimiento, mientras que en la CE fallecieron

22 de 37 (59,4%) pacientes ($p = 0,000$), con un RR de 0,32 (IC 95% 0,18-0,55, NNT de 2,48). Si sólo se compara esta pequeña cohorte sometida a ambos procedimientos con la CL, el RR es de 1,2 y el NNT de 23, y si se compara con la CE, el RR es de 0,39, NNT de 2,8, lo que demuestra gráficamente que ambos procedimientos combinados son peores que la ligadura sola, pero mejores que la esclerosis sola.

El análisis de supervivencia de Kaplan Meyer para todas las cohortes (Figura 1) presenta diferencias significativas en la supervivencia de la CL comparada con la CE, mostrando además que el grueso de la mortalidad de ambas cohortes se produce en los primeros 100 meses, para estabilizarse por el resto del seguimiento.

El análisis multivariado de regresión de Cox encontró que de todas las estudiadas, las variables ligadura y esclerosis, más la suma de los pacientes con estadios Child B y C, eran capaces de modificar la supervivencia final (Tabla 2).

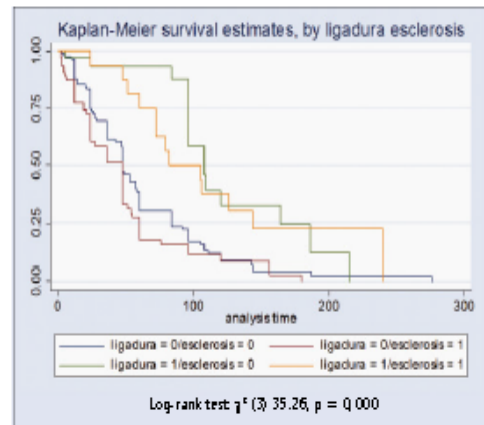


Figura 1. Análisis de supervivencia de las cohortes (ligadura, esclerosis, ambas y ninguna).

Tabla 2. Modelo final de la regresión de Cox con las variables que modifican la mortalidad

_t	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P > z	[95% CI]
Sobrevivencia	37,4391				
Esclerosis	-,8997443	,2137492	-4,21	0,000	-,1,318685 - ,4608035
Ligaduras	,2320203	,1569966	1,46	0,139	-,0756873 - ,539728
Child B+C	,3368835	,1637964	2,06	0,040	,0158484 - ,6579187

Variables estudiadas: esclerosis, ligaduras, sexo, edad, uso de propranolol, estadios Child A y suma de Child B+C y sus interacciones.

Discusión

El mejor estudio para responder una pregunta de la eficacia de un tratamiento es un ensayo clínico aleatorizado. Un estudio de cohortes como el actual, tiene muchas desventajas por la ausencia de aleatorización y de ciegos, y el carácter retrospectivo de una de ellas. Sin intentar equiparar la calidad de la evidencia obtenida (A2 vs B2), los resultados de la aleatorización se miden en la distribución similar de todos las covariables que no sean los resultados de la intervención. En este estudio, las cohortes estudiadas muestran una distribución similar de todas las variables de interés que pudiera haber desbalanceado los resultados excepto en el tiempo de seguimiento (Tabla 1). Estas variables se comportan tal y como si hubieran sido aleatorizadas exitosamente. La explicación de este fenómeno es que la patología y los pacientes en estudio son similares dentro del período de tiempo estudiado. En cuanto al posible sesgo introducido por la falta de ciegos, al no poder coger uno u otro procedimiento en su momento, ya que la ligadura no estaba aún disponible, este no parece muy importante.

Otro posible sesgo se encuentra en el tiempo del seguimiento. Dada la historia natural y clínica de la enfermedad, es de esperar que mientras más tiempo pase la mortalidad será mayor. Esto puede sesgar los resultados a favor de la ligadura cuya cohorte tuvo como promedio un año menos de seguimiento. La manera final de aclarar este punto es continuar con el seguimiento aproximadamente un año más, y realizar una nueva comparación cuando los tiempos se equiparen. Como dato adicional el análisis de sobrevida muestra que la mortalidad para todos los tipos de tratamiento se produce mayormente en el primer tercio de tiempo post intervención y luego se estabiliza, lo que disminuye este posible sesgo, aunque probablemente no lo elimina (Figura 1).

Si bien las cohortes no son muy grandes, su número alcanza para mantener el error del azar dentro de los límites comúnmente aceptados, y es uno de los que cuenta con mayor *n* de todos los estudios publicados^{23,24}.

Los resultados obtenidos son válidos con las variables que fueron posibles de estudiar, otras variables como manejo de la HDA en UCI, drogas vasoactivas, profilaxis antibiótica y otros, no se tomaron en cuenta por que en su momento no es-

taban disponibles o los datos no fueron suficientes, por lo que su papel en disminuir la mortalidad no puede ser adecuadamente evaluada en este trabajo.

Con las poblaciones estudiadas, se pueden responder varias preguntas. Por un lado se logra obtener un panorama regional claro en relación a la historia clínica de las várices en pacientes portadores de cirrosis. En nuestro medio, con un total de 597 pacientes hospitalizados por cirrosis hepática en la década del 2000 al 2010, 234 de ellos con várices, con seguimiento razonablemente largo y cruce de informaciones, podemos fijar en 39,2% los porcentajes de presencia de várices (30%) en la literatura¹. El porcentaje de pacientes portadores de várices que sangran en un momento dado en nuestro medio es de 55%, (30 al 70%) referido en la literatura¹⁻⁴. El porcentaje de resangrado llega a ser de 67,7, (30-40%) en la literatura⁴.

Pero el objetivo principal del estudio fue el comparar la eficacia de las dos opciones endoscópicas. La ligadura endoscópica tuvo claras ventajas sobre la esclerosis, en los resultados medidos. La menor tasa de resangrado posterior a la intervención (39 vs 72%, RR de 0,53, NNT 3) de la ligadura, y una mortalidad menor (20 vs 48%, RR 0,41, NNT 3,55) son importantes y estadísticamente significativas. La proporción de la hemorragia como causa de la muerte también es menor entre ambas cohortes (40 vs 65%). Estos resultados son muy similares en su datos numéricos a los obtenidos en el metaanálisis de Laine²⁵.

Es interesante el comportamiento de la pequeña cohorte en la que se sobreponen ambos métodos, y que causa un sesgo que cuando es incorporado en el análisis favorece los resultados de la CL, mejorando el RR y el NNT. La tercera cohorte (CSTE), en la que no se hizo ninguna intervención endoscópica en las várices que no sangraron y que, por lo tanto, representaba el espectro menos agresivo de estas, presenta una mortalidad baja, parecida a la ligadura. Esto ha sido previamente descrito en la literatura^{20,21} (Saeed 1997, Umehara 1999).

Dada la historia natural y clínica de la cirrosis, es inevitable que la mortalidad a largo plazo sea la misma para cualquier método de detención de sangrado por lo que se debe colocar un tiempo límite de corte para juzgar adecuadamente la ventaja de un método sobre otro. A juzgar por la curva de supervivencia, este límite podría ser de alrededor de 80-100 meses. La diferencia del tiem-

po de seguimiento de ambas cohortes, al ser mayor en la CE, puede estar favoreciendo los resultados encontrados de la ligadura. Excepto el tiempo, los resultados obtenidos parecen depender en gran parte de los procedimientos y no de otras variables, ya que todas las características demográficas, clínica y de gravedad de la enfermedad se mantuvieron similares y equilibradas entre las cohortes estudiadas. Se debe aclarar que las cohortes fueron de vórices tratadas y no de vórices erradicadas, lo que no se pudo lograr por muchos motivos.

Este trabajo permite contar con datos propios que ayudan a tomar decisiones de tratamiento, y apoyan las conclusiones de las reuniones de consenso de tratamiento de vórices esofágicas, específicamente el punto 3 con datos racionales, con un nivel de evidencia 2b, y un grado de recomendación B favoreciendo la ligadura.

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FE DE ERRATAS

En el Artículo de Investigación "Comparación de la efectividad de la ligadura vs esclerosis endoscópica en pacientes con sangrado de vórices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco: estudio de cohortes comparativas", de los autores Eddy Ríos, Armando Sierralta, Marigraciela Abarzúa, Joaquín Bastías, María Inés Barra,

publicado en Rev Med Chile 2012; 140: 713-8, debe agregarse en la filiación del primer autor: "Eddy Ríos es un doctorado de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, España". En el mismo artículo, en la Discusión, pág. 717, primer párrafo, líneas 20-21, Dice "al no poder coger" Debe decir: "al no poder escoger".

1368

Rev Med Chile 2012; 140: 1367-1368

ARTICULO 2.-

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension.

Eddy Ríos Castellanos, Pamela Seron, Javier P Gisbert, Xavier Bonfill Cosp. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2012, Issue 10. Art. Nº.: CD010180. DOL: 10.1002/14651858. CD010180

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Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review)

Castellanos ER, Scron P, Gisbert JP, Bonfill Cosp X



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Endoscopic Injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review)
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[Intervention Review]

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

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ABSTRACT

Background

Endoscopic sclerotherapy of bleeding gastric varices with N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate glue (cyanoacrylate) has shown the best haemostasis and a lower incidence of re-bleeding compared with other endoscopic methods. However, there are some inconsistencies between studies regarding mortality, incidence of re-bleeding, and adverse effects.

Objectives

To assess the benefits and harms of sclerotherapy using cyanoacrylate compared with other endoscopic sclerotherapy methods and with variceal band ligation in acute gastric variceal bleeding.

Search methods

Search of trials was based on The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Controlled Trials Register, the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL), MEDLINE, EMBASE, Science Citation Index Expanded, and EBSCO CINAHL from inception through February 2013 and in reference lists of relevant articles. There were no restrictions with respect to language, date of publication or study setting.

Selection criteria

Randomised clinical trials comparing sclerotherapy using cyanoacrylate with other endoscopic methods (sclerotherapy using alcohol-based compounds and endoscopy band ligation) for acute gastric variceal bleeding in patients with portal hypertension.

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review)

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Data collection and analysis

Two review authors assessed eligible trials for inclusion independently of each other and extracted relevant data. Main outcome measures included mortality, failure to control bleeding, re-bleeding and adverse effects.

Results were presented as risk ratios (RR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) with I^2 statistic values as a measure of intertrial heterogeneity. Data were reported using a random-effects model. Subgroup, sensitivity, and trial sequential analyses were performed in order to evaluate the robustness of the overall results, risk of bias, sources of intertrial heterogeneity, and risk of random errors.

Main results

Three different comparisons of the use of endoscopic sclerosis with cyanoacrylate in the treatment of bleeding gastric varices were conducted, including six trials in total.

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

Based on results from one randomised trial with adequate bias control and comprising 91 patients, 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate seems to be as effective as 1 mL regarding mortality (RR 0.94; 95% CI 0.36 - 2.45), treatment failure, prevention of re-bleeding and control of bleeding, but with fewer complications (RR 1.79; CI 95% CI 1.02 - 3.15).

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol based compounds

As seen in one randomised trial with unclear bias control and comprising 37 patients, 2 of 20 patients (10%) died after 30 days in the cyanoacrylate group versus 4 of 17 (23.5%) in the alcohol-based compounds group. Relative risk analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.43; 95% CI 0.09 to 2.04). Likewise, there were no statistically significant differences regarding failure of intervention or re-bleeding. However, statistically significant differences were found with cyanoacrylate regarding lower complications (RR 0.43; 95% CI 0.22 to 0.80) and better control of bleeding (RR 1.79; 95% CI 1.13 to 2.84).

Cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation (EBL)

Based on results from four trials (three full papers and one abstract), two with adequate and two with unclear bias control, and comprising 366 patients, a total of 44 of 185 patients (23.7%) who received cyanoacrylate died during the observation period compared with 50 of 181 patients (27.6%) who received EBL. Random-effects model meta-analysis failed to find statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.83; 95% CI 0.52 to 1.31) and there was evidence of internal heterogeneity ($I^2 = 29\%$). Results did not change with subgroup analyses of full papers/abstract, low/unclear risk of bias, type of varices, inclusion of patients with hepatocarcinoma, use of vasoactive drugs, or short/long term follow-up. There were no differences in failure of intervention, complications, bleeding control, or all related subgroup analysis. However, for re-bleeding, a total of 33 of 183 patients (18%) who received cyanoacrylate presented re-bleeding versus 53 of 177 (29.9%) who received EBL. Differences between these groups were found to be statistically significant (RR 0.60; 95% CI 0.41 to 0.88, $I^2 = 6\%$) and trial sequential analysis showed that random error was unlikely to cause this effect. Results did not change when conducting subgroup analysis of full papers/abstract, selection bias, type of varices, short/long-term follow-up, or use of vasoactive drugs.

Authors' conclusions

This review suggests that endoscopic sclerosis using cyanoacrylate may be more effective than endoscopic band ligation in terms of preventing re-bleeding. The severity of the underlying liver disease, type of gastric varices, length of follow-up, presence of advanced hepatocellular carcinoma, and use of vasoactive drugs does not appear to modify the main outcomes. However, it must be noted that the number of randomised clinical trials and the patients included in each of them was small. In addition, there was evidence of internal heterogeneity across studies associated to the type of gastric varices, length of follow-up, and selection and allocation biases. These shortcomings call for further evidence from larger trials with standardised data.

Additionally this review shows that endoscopic sclerosis using 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate seems to be as effective as 1 mL of cyanoacrylate in terms of bleeding control, re-bleeding, and mortality but with fewer complications. Cyanoacrylate also seems to be more effective than alcohol-based compounds regarding bleeding control and complications. However, these statements must be read with caution because there was only one randomised trial available for each one of these comparisons.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review) 2
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Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Is endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate better than endoscopic band ligation and injection of alcohol-based compounds for bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension?

Background

Acute bleeding from ruptured gastric varices, the most severe consequence of portal hypertension, is associated with high mortality. The most promising treatment for this condition is endoscopic sclerosis with N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate (cyanoacrylate), a glue that has often been used as first line treatment. However, incidence of re-bleeding and complications have opened the door to a debate when compared with other endoscopic procedures.

Characteristic of included studies

This review includes six trials (search trough February 2013) of three different comparisons regarding the use of cyanoacrylate: different dosage (one study, 91 people), compared with alcohol-based compounds (one study, 37 people), and compared with endoscopic band ligation (four studies, 366 people). Bias control was adequate in three trials, and inadequate in the remaining three. It must be kept in mind, however, that blinding of an endoscopic procedure is not always possible. Results assessed included mortality, treatment failure, re-bleeding, other complications, and bleeding control. Time of follow-up varied from 6 to 26 months. All patients included in these studies had chronic liver disease of different severity and were predominantly male. Most of the studies came from Eastern countries, although it must be noted that prevalence of chronic liver disease is fairly similar worldwide, with differences in etiology that have no effect on variceal bleeding.

Results

Results from four of the six included studies suggest that cyanoacrylate may be better than endoscopic band ligation regarding re-bleeding, and that it is as effective as endoscopic band ligation regarding bleeding control, treatment failure, and prevention of mortality. In addition, another study also shows that lower doses of cyanoacrylate are as effective as higher ones, but with fewer complications. The last included study implies that cyanoacrylate may be better than endoscopic sclerosis using alcohol-based compounds in terms of bleeding control and incidence of complications.

Quality of evidence

The combined evidence comparing cyanoacrylate with band ligation was obtained from trials with similar definitions of bleeding, treatment failure, re-bleeding, mortality, and severity of the underlying liver disease. There were, nonetheless, differences in the type of gastric varices, active or acute bleeding, length of follow-up, inclusion of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma, and use of vasoactive drugs. Stratified analysis failed to show that any of these differences changed the main results, but the quality of the evidence is low due to risk of bias and imprecision (the evidence is extracted from very few randomised trials with a relatively small number of patients). The worst complication associated with cyanoacrylate, embolism to distal organs, was only marginal. The results for different doses and for the comparison with alcohol-based compounds was obtained each from only one trial, both with a small number of patients.

	867 per 1000	901 per 1000 (676 to 1000)
	Moderate	
	867 per 1000	902 per 1000 (676 to 1000)

*The basis for the **assumed risk** (e.g. the median control group risk across studies) is provided in footnotes. The **corresponding risk** (and its 95% confidence interval) is based on the assumed risk in the comparison group and the **relative effect** of the intervention (and its 95% CI).
 CI: Confidence Interval; RR: Risk ratio

GRADE Working Group grades of evidence

High quality: Further research is very unlikely to change our confidence in the estimate of effect.

Moderate quality: Further research is likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and may change the estimate.

Low quality: Further research is very likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and is likely to change the estimate.

Very low quality: We are very uncertain about the estimate.

¹ Small numbers, 14 events, Total size 91

² Small numbers, 26 events, Total size 91

³ Small numbers, 35 events, Total size 91

⁴ Small numbers, Total events 31, Total size 91

⁵ Small numbers, 22 events, Total size 91

⁶ Small numbers, Total events 22, Total size of active bleeders 25

4. Re-bleeding: number of patients in which the intervention was unable to prevent re-bleeding at short term (approximately one week) (see *Differences between protocol and review*).

5. Adverse events: number of patients with pulmonary embolism caused by cyanoacrylate (measured by radiological and clinical criteria) or with cyanoacrylate embolism in other organs such as brain and spleen. Patients who developed septicaemia after intervention, those with other serious adverse effects according to the International Conference on Harmonization Guidelines (ICH-GCP 1997) (see *Differences between protocol and review*).

Secondary outcomes

6. Control of bleeding: number of patients in which the intervention was able to control bleeding in the first intervention.

7. Number of transfusions: number of packed red cell transfusions while in hospital (see *Differences between protocol and review*).

8. Quality of life (see *Differences between protocol and review*).

9. TIPS or surgery: number of patients that underwent TIPS or surgery (see *Differences between protocol and review*).

Search methods for identification of studies

Electronic searches

We retrieved randomised clinical trials through electronic searches of the Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Controlled Trials Register (Gluud 2014), the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL), MEDLINE, EMBASE, and Science Citation Index Expanded (Royle 2003). We also searched the World Health Organization (WHO) International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (www.who.int/ictrp/en/). The search strategies with the time spans of the searches are displayed in Appendix 1.

Searching other resources

We reviewed the reference lists of the retrieved articles for potentially relevant studies on benefits and harms, including review articles on the topic. We attempted to contact the corresponding authors of relevant studies identified from the initial search and experts in the field to request information on unpublished articles. We also tried to contact the authors of the publications of interest if further clarification was necessary. We made a search of the proceedings of the most important conferences related to digestive endoscopy for unpublished trials.

Data collection and analysis

We followed the instructions given in the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Intervention* (Higgins 2011) and the Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Module (Gluud 2014).

Selection of studies

Two authors (ER, PS) undertook the trial selection process. They were unblinded with regard to names of the authors, investigators, institutions, and results. The authors independently extracted data to assess whether trials met the inclusion criteria. Discrepancies were resolved by discussion and involvement of a third author (JG) when necessary.

Data extraction and management

We designed standardised extraction sheets and pilot-tested them before use. The following data was extracted:

- Trial characteristics: risk of bias, design, number of intervention groups, number of patients with missing data, and length of follow-up.
- Patient characteristics: number of patients randomised to each intervention group, mean (or median) age, number of males and females, severity of bleeding (according to haemoglobin level, arterial pressure, heart rate), stage of liver compromise according to Child-Pugh and Model for End-stage Liver Disease (MELD) classifications, main diagnosis or cause of portal hypertension, time from beginning of bleeding to treatment, factors precipitating bleeding, type of gastric varices.
- Intervention characteristics: type and dose of the experimental and control interventions, duration of therapy, mode of administration, type and dose of additional interventions and obliteration and/or eradication of varices if reported.

We also recorded if intention-to-treat analysis was implemented, if blinded assessment of outcome measures was conducted, and if a sample-size calculation was performed before the trial started. Two review authors (ER, PS) independently extracted relevant data from the studies. The authors were unblinded with regard to names of the authors, investigators, institutions, and results. Discrepancies were resolved by discussion and involvement of a third author (JG) when necessary.

Assessment of risk of bias in included studies

Randomised trials with high risk of bias may lead to over- or underestimation of intervention effects (Schulz 1995; Moher 1998; Kjaergard 2001; Wood 2008; Lundh 2012; Savovic 2012; Savovic J 2012). To assess a risk of bias in a trial, we have used a set of bias risk domains relevant for our review (see below) (Higgins 2011).

Allocation sequence generation

- Low risk of bias: sequence generation was achieved using computer random number generation or a random number table. Drawing lots, tossing a coin, shuffling cards, and throwing dice are adequate if performed by an independent person not otherwise involved in the trial.

- Uncertain risk of bias: the method of sequence generation was not specified.
- High risk of bias: the sequence generation method was not random.

Allocation concealment

- Low risk of bias: the participant allocations could not have been foreseen in advance of, or during, enrolment. Allocation was controlled by a central and independent randomisation unit. The allocation sequence was unknown to the investigators (for example, if the allocation sequence was hidden in sequentially numbered, opaque, and sealed envelopes).
- Uncertain risk of bias: the method used to conceal the allocation was not described, so that intervention allocations may have been foreseen in advance of, or during, enrolment.
- High risk of bias: the allocation sequence was likely to be known to the investigators who assigned the participants.

Blinding of participants, personnel, and outcome assessors

- Low risk of bias: blinding was performed adequately, or the assessment of outcomes was not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding.
- Uncertain risk of bias: there was insufficient information to assess whether blinding was likely to induce bias on the results.
- High risk of bias: no blinding or incomplete blinding, and the assessment of outcomes were likely to be influenced by lack of blinding.

Incomplete outcome data

- Low risk of bias: missing data were unlikely to make treatment effects depart from plausible values. Sufficient methods, such as multiple imputation, has been employed to handle missing data.
- Uncertain risk of bias: there was insufficient information to assess whether the missing data in combination with the method used to handle missing data were likely to induce bias on the results.
- High risk of bias: the results were likely to be biased due to missing data.

Selective outcome reporting

- Low risk of bias: all outcomes were pre-defined and reported, or all clinically relevant and reasonably expected outcomes were reported.
- Uncertain risk of bias: it is unclear whether all pre-defined and clinically relevant and reasonably expected outcomes were reported.
- High risk of bias: one or more clinically relevant and reasonably expected outcomes were not reported, and data on these outcomes were likely to have been recorded.

For-profit bias

- Low risk of bias: the trial appears to be free of industry sponsorship or other kind of for-profit support that may manipulate the trial design, conductance, or results of the trial.
- Uncertain risk of bias: the trial may or may not be free of for-profit bias as no information on clinical trial support or sponsorship is provided.
- High risk of bias: the trial is sponsored by the industry or has received other kind of for-profit support

Other bias

- Low risk of bias: the trial appears to be free of other components (for example, academic bias) that could put it at risk of bias.
- Uncertain risk of bias: the trial may or may not be free of other components that could put it at risk of bias.
- High risk of bias: there are other factors in the trial that could put it at risk of bias (for example, authors have conducted trials on the same topic, for -profit involvement, unbalanced co-interventions, etc).

We considered trials to have low risk of bias if they were classified as 'low risk of bias' in all of the individual domains specified above. We considered trials to have 'high risk of bias' if the risk of bias was judged as high or uncertain in any of the individual domains specified above.

Measures of treatment effect

We used relative risks (RR) with 95% confidence intervals (CI) (Higgins 2011). Absolute measures of effect were determined by calculating absolute risk reduction, number needed to treat (NNT) and number needed to harm (NNH) whenever results were statistically significant. For continuous data the weighted mean difference (WMD) with 95% CI was calculated.

Unit of analysis issues

Patients in the individual randomised trials.

Dealing with missing data

We conducted all analyses using the intention-to-treat principle, which included all randomised patients irrespective of compliance or follow-up. We did not detect relevant missing data in the full-article papers, as all expected results were accounted for. There were, however, patients lost to follow-up after the main measures had been taken.

We attempted to contact the authors of the article in an abstract form that was included in this review. However, we received no response.

Assessment of heterogeneity

We examined statistical heterogeneity between results of different trials by checking the test statistic (Cochrane's Q), with significance set at $P < 0.1$. We also calculated inconsistency (I^2 statistic) with an I^2 of 50% judged as high heterogeneity (Higgins 2003).

Assessment of reporting biases

We did not assess reporting biases by means of a funnel plot as we did not have the minimum of 10 trials needed to construct it (Egger 1997).

Data synthesis

We performed statistical analyses following the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* (Higgins 2011) and using Review Manager 5.2 (RevMan 2011).

We used mean and standard deviations to derive a mean difference (MD) for continuous data, as well as risk ratios and confidence intervals for dichotomous data.

When possible, data were meta-analysed using both random-effects and fixed-effect models to ensure robustness of the results. In case of differences in findings regarding significance of the intervention effect using the two models, we presented the results with both methods. When there were no differences in the results, we presented only the random-effects model (Higgins 2011).

We included 'Summary of findings' tables on the primary and some secondary outcomes (GRADEpro 2008; Guyatt 2008; Higgins 2011).

Trial sequential analysis

We performed trial sequential analysis (TSA) (CTU 2011; Thorlund 2011) on the data from trials with low and high risk of bias separately (Wetterslev 2008). The outcomes analysed using TSA were mortality and re-bleeding, regardless of whether they yielded statistically significant results in the meta-analyses. The meta-analytic estimate of the control event proportions of the trials with low risk of bias was used as the control event proportion in the TSA. We used the intervention effect estimated in the meta-analysis of trials with low risk of bias and performed a sensitivity analysis using an a priori intervention effect of 20% risk ratio reduction. For each TSA performed, a required heterogeneity-adjusted information size was calculated based on the intervention effect suggested by trials with low risk of bias (LBHIS) and an a priori intervention effect of 20% risk ratio reduction, a risk of

type I error of 5% and a risk of type II error of 20% (Brok 2008; Wetterslev 2008; Brok 2009; Thorlund 2009; Wetterslev 2009; Thorlund 2010). Heterogeneity adjustment was performed with the observed heterogeneity adjustment factor $(1/(1-I^2))$ using the heterogeneity estimated (I^2) among all trials and with an a priori assumed final heterogeneity of 50%. We performed separate TSA analyses using a risk of type I error (α) of 5% with a risk of type II error (β) of 20%, as well as analysis using a risk of type I error (α) of 1% with a risk of type II error (β) of 10%.

Subgroup analysis and investigation of heterogeneity

When possible, we performed the following subgroup analyses:

- Trials with low risk versus high risk of bias.
- In the case when co-interventions were detected, we compared trials with co-interventions to trials without co-interventions (use of vaso active drugs).
- Comparison of patients with different type of varices or inclusion of patients with hepatocarcinoma.

We grouped trials according to severity of the underlying disease using Child-Pugh and MELD scores when available.

Sensitivity analysis

Individual trials were included or excluded during the review process to determine whether the conclusions were robust.

RESULTS

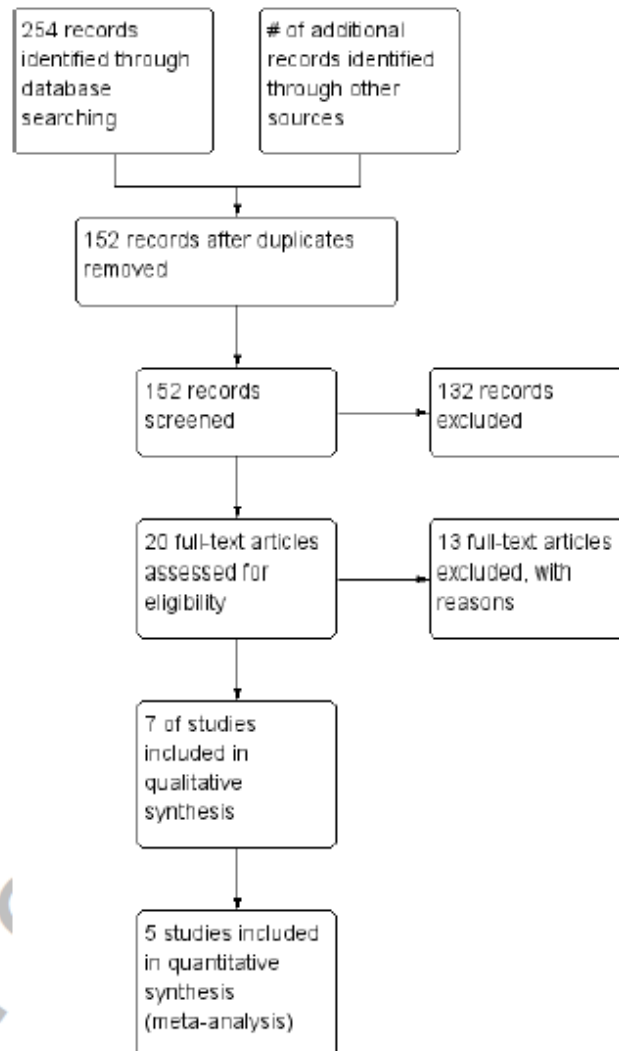
Description of studies

See: [Characteristics of included studies](#).

Results of the search

From a total of 254 identified studies, 98 duplicates were removed. The abstracts of the remaining 156 studies were analysed which allowed eliminating 137 references that did not refer to randomised trials. The full-text versions of the 19 remaining studies were assessed in depth. Of these, all references dealing with primary or secondary prevention of bleeding were excluded. At the end, five studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in the final analysis (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Study flow diagram.



Included studies

Descriptive statistics for the whole group of trials

One trial that is in abstract form lacks most of the data (Zheng 2012).

Mean sample size was 82 patients (range 37 to 150). Three trials incorporated a mix of active and acute bleeding, whereas three incorporated only acute bleeding. One trial compared two different doses of cyanoacrylate, one trial compared cyanoacrylate versus alcohol-based compounds (absolute alcohol), and four trials compared cyanoacrylate and endoscopic band ligation.

Mean age of all included patients was 53.4 (range 22 to 75), whereas age for patients randomised to cyanoacrylate, band ligation and alcohol-based compounds was 54.6 years (range 24 to 75), 56.2 years (range 42 to 74) and 35 years (range 22 to 48) respectively. Most patients were men: male:female ratio was 322/113 (65%) overall, 67% for patients randomised to cyanoacrylate, 66% for patients randomised to band ligation and 72% for patients randomised to alcohol-based compounds.

Five trials (83%) were conducted in a single clinical site, whereas one trial (17%) was conducted in three clinical sites. Five trials were published as full papers and one in abstract form, all within the period from 2001 to 2012. Trials were performed in Egypt (n=1), Taiwan (n=1), Republic of China (n=2), Taipei (n=1), and India (n=1).

All trials assessed mortality (mainly bleeding-related mortality), treatment failure, re-bleeding, and complications. Timing for the outcomes varied across trials. Trials involving cyanoacrylate versus band ligation assessed variceal obliteration as well. Mean time of total follow-up was 16.3 months (range 6 - 26 months).

Inclusion criteria were patients with portal hypertension, clinical signs of bleeding, endoscopic signs of bleeding, written consent (patient or relative), and adult age. Exclusion criteria were undetermined source of bleeding, previous history of any endoscopy or shunt treatment, encephalopathy, hepatorenal syndrome, non-consent, terminal illness, major organ system disease, life expectancy of 24 hours or less, portal thrombosis and gastric varices without stigmata of bleeding. One trial excluded patients with hepatocarcinoma, whereas four others did not.

The criteria used for assessing active or acute bleeding involved clinical signs of bleeding, endoscopic signs of bleeding, adherent clot, white nipple or variceal erosion, large varices with red spots or wale marking and absence of other causes of bleeding.

Underlying liver disease was diagnosed based on clinical, biochemical or histological signs. Most of the aetiology underlying the hepatic disease was post-viral hepatitis (59%), with alcohol liver disease being the least common (17%). All trials classified varices ac-

ording to Sarin's classification (Sarin 1992). Three trials focused on all types of gastric varices, whereas one focused only on isolated varices (IGV1), and another focused on cardinal varices (GOV1). Concomitant oesophageal varices were ligated during the first endoscopy session in all trials.

The stage of liver involvement according to the Child-Pugh classification score for all patients (available data in 4 of 6 trials) was: Child A: 90 patients (26.1%); Child B: 171 patients (49.7%) and Child C: 83 patients (24.1%). The Model for End-stage Liver Disease (MELD) classification could not be used because it was present only in one trial.

An average of 5.2 units of blood were used in all patients, 5.8 units in the cyanoacrylate group and 4.6 units in the band ligation group (data available from two trials). TIPS was offered after second endoscopy treatment failure in one trial (no numbers available). Surgery was conducted in one trial after second endoscopy treatment failure (one after cyanoacrylate failure, four after band ligation failure). Vasoactive drugs were used in four trials.

Cyanoacrylate injection was performed intra-variceally in all cases, starting near the bleeding point. Each injection was composed of 0.5 mL of N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate and 0.5 - 1.8 mL of Lipiodol, using a 21-23 gauge needle (range 1 - 6 injections). Sessions were repeated at 1 - 4 weeks until varix eradication. Patients were then followed up at three to six months after treatment; cyanoacrylate injection was repeated in case of variceal recurrence. The average number of sessions needed to obliterate varices was 1.98.

Band ligation was performed with one shooter and over tube in one trial and with a multi-band shooter (standard or pneumatic ligator) in six trials. Four to ten bands were used in each session. Sessions were repeated at 1 - 4 weeks until varix eradication. Subsequently, patients were followed at three to six months after treatment; banding was repeated in case of variceal recurrence. The average number of sessions needed to obliterate varices was 2.1. In five cases (one in one trial, four in another) treatment switched from band ligation to cyanoacrylate after the first treatment failure. The trial in the former carried out an intention-to-treat analysis.

Although there were a number of adverse events reported in these studies, the worst complication associated with cyanoacrylate, embolism, occurred in only three patients in the entire group of trials, two using cyanoacrylate and one using band ligation.

Description of individual trials

There were three different comparisons in the six trials. One trial compared two different doses of cyanoacrylate (Hou 2009), one compared cyanoacrylate versus alcohol-based compounds (Sarin 2002); and four compared cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; El Amin 2010; Zheng 2012).

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

Only one trial compared two different doses of cyanoacrylate, 0.5 mL vs 1 mL (Hou 2009). This single-centre trial from China randomised 91 adult patients bleeding actively from all types of gastric varices (proportion of type GOV / IGV1 similar in both groups). Demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups were similar. Randomisation, allocation sequence generation and allocation concealment were adequate. Patients were not blinded, but personnel conducting the corresponding assessment were blinded. Sample size calculation was done but significance was not achieved owing to the small sample size. Intention-to treat was applied. Control of active bleeding, rebleeding, bleeding-related mortality and complications were measured. Total length of follow-up was 26 months. There were 2 patients lost to follow-up in group 0.5 mL and 3 in group 1 mL but their outcomes had already been measured. This trial was considered as low-risk of bias.

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol-based compounds

Only one randomised trial compared cyanoacrylate and alcohol-based compounds (Sarin 2002). This single-centre trial from India randomised 37 adult patients, both with active and acute bleeding (17 active, 20 acute) from isolated gastric varices only (IGV1). Demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups were similar. Randomisation and allocation sequence generation were adequate. Patients or personnel assessing outcomes were not blinded. Sample size calculations were not reported, and intention-to treat was not declared. Cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL plus lipiodol 0.7 mL or absolute alcohol 2-9 mL were used. All acute patients were treated with somatostatin or octreotide before and after the intervention. Control of active bleeding, rebleeding, bleeding-related mortality, complications, failure of treatment and variceal obliteration were measured. Length of follow-up was 14.4 ± 3.7 months. There was one patient in each group lost for follow-up. This trial was considered as high risk of bias.

Cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation

Four trials that compared cyanoacrylate and endoscopic band ligation (EBL) were found. Three were full-text articles, while another was an abstract from the proceedings of an international meeting (Zheng 2012). The first is a randomised trial comparing cyanoacrylate versus EBL in bleeding GOV1 type only gastric varices (El Amin 2010). This multicentre trial from Egypt randomised 150 adult patients bleeding actively, excluding patients with advanced hepatocarcinoma. Demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups were similar. Allocation sequence generation and concealment was appropriate, although the randomisation method is not described. Patients or personnel were not blinded. Sample size calculation was not described and intention-to-treat analysis was not declared.

Cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL, plus 0.7 mL of Lipiodol or EBL using a six shooter device were used. Vasoactive drugs and non-selective beta blockers were not used before or after the procedure in either group. Concurrent oesophageal varices in both groups were treated by EBL in the same endoscopy session. Control of active bleeding (initial haemostasis), rebleeding, bleeding-related mortality, survival time, complications, failure of treatment and obliteration were measured. Length of follow-up was 6 months. One patient with EBL was switched to cyanoacrylate after treatment failure with EBL. This trial was considered as high risk of bias.

The second is a randomised trial that compared cyanoacrylate versus EBL in bleeding gastric varices of all types (Lo 2001). This single-centre trial from China randomised 60 adult patients bleeding actively or recently, including patients with hepatocarcinoma. Demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups were similar. Randomisation and allocation sequence generation and concealment were adequate. Patients or personnel were not blinded. Sample size calculation is described (originally 242 patients in each group were needed, but after 3 years, interim analyses reached significance) and intention-to-treat analysis was applied. Cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL, plus 1.5 mL of Lipiodol or EBL using a pneumatic ligator device plus over tube were used. Vasoactive drugs and non-selective beta blockers were not used before or after the procedure in either group. Concurrent oesophageal varices in both groups were treated by EBL in the same endoscopy session. Control of active bleeding (initial haemostasis), re-bleeding, bleeding-related mortality, complications and failure of treatment were measured. Length of follow-up was 14 months for cyanoacrylate and 9 months for EBL. One patient in each group was lost to follow-up and one patient in EBL was switched to cyanoacrylate. This trial was considered as low risk of bias.

The third is a randomised trial comparing cyanoacrylate and EBL in bleeding gastric varices of all types (Tan 2006). This single-centre trial from Taiwan randomised 97 adult patients both with active and acute bleeding (30 active, 66 acute) from all types of gastric varices, including patients with hepatocarcinoma. Demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups were similar. Randomisation and allocation sequence generation and concealment were adequate. Patients were not blinded, but the personnel conducting assessments were blinded. Sample size calculation is described and a modified intention-to-treat was applied. Cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL, mixed with 0.5 mL of lipiodol or EBL using a pneumatic ligator were used. Vasoactive drugs were used in both groups before the procedure. Concurrent oesophageal varices in both groups were treated by EBL in the same endoscopy session. Control of active bleeding, re-bleeding, bleeding-related mortality, complications and failure of treatment were measured. Length of follow-up was 6 months. Four patients (two in each group) were lost to follow-up and four patients were switched from EBL to cyanoacrylate. This trial was considered as low risk of bias.

The fourth reference is an abstract paper presented at the proceedings of a meeting (Zheng 2012). We tried in several occasions, with

no success, to contact the authors in order to locate the full-text paper. This single-centre trial from China randomised 58 adult patients bleeding actively from gastric varices. Data on randomisation, allocation sequence generation and concealment, or blinding of personnel is not available. There are no available data on sample size calculations or intention-to-treat analyses. Cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL, mixed with 0.5 mL of lipiodol or EBL were used. Vasoactive drugs were used in all patients before endoscopic treatment. Concurrent oesophageal varices in both groups were treated by EBL in the same endoscopy session. Somatostatin and proton pump inhibitors were used in all patients before endoscopic treatment. Control of active bleeding, re-bleeding, survival rates and complications were measured. There are no available data on length or loss of follow-up.

Excluded studies

See: [Characteristics of excluded studies](#)

Risk of bias in included studies

Allocation

Four trials reported adequate allocation sequence generation (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; Sarin 2002; Hou 2009), whereas in two allocation sequence generation was unclear (El Amin 2010; Zheng 2012). Four trials had adequate allocation concealment (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; Hou 2009; El Amin 2010), whereas two had unclear allocation concealment (Sarin 2002; Zheng 2012).

Blinding

Due to the nature of the intervention, patients were not blinded in any of the trials. However, two trials reported some form of blinded outcome assessment (Tan 2006; Hou 2009), even though the outcome measurements for these studies were not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding.

Incomplete outcome data

Three trials reported intention-to-treat analyses that counted for all randomised patients (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; Hou 2009), in one

of them a modified intention-to-treat analysis was used (inclusion criteria was applied only after randomisation) (Tan 2006). Two trials did not specifically report intention-to-treat analysis (El Amin 2010; Sarin 2002), and there was no available data on this matter in the article in abstract (Zheng 2012).

In four trials the methods used to account for patients with missing data appears to be correct (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; Hou 2009). In one trial there were no patients lost to follow-up (El Amin 2010), and in another those lost to follow-up were equally distributed among groups. For the one trial in abstract form, there was not enough data to assess incomplete outcome data (Zheng 2012).

Selective reporting

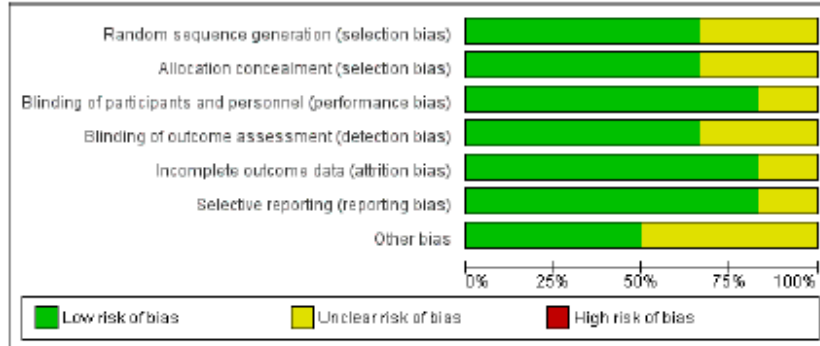
With the exception of the study in abstract form, (Zheng 2012) all trials reported mortality, treatment failure, re-bleeding, adverse effects, and control of bleeding in both groups. Definition of time of mortality and re-bleeding varied across trials. It was possible to extract data on adverse events, despite the fact that definitions also varied across trials. Pain, fever and embolism were nonetheless, common to all trials.

Other potential sources of bias

Three trials reported sample size calculation (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; Hou 2009). One of these was terminated after three years at the point when interim analyses reached significant differences (Lo 2001). Three trials did not report sample size calculations or whether trials were terminated at any arbitrary point (Oho 1995; Sarin 2002; El Amin 2010), while the study in abstract form did not provide any data on this matter (Zheng 2012). None of the trials reported clear differences between baseline characteristics of patients randomised to cyanoacrylate or the alternative intervention. Severity of the underlying hepatic disease measured by the Child-Pugh classification shows remarkable uniformity across all trials. Major differences between trials were the inclusion or exclusion of patients with hepatocarcinoma, type of gastric varices, length of follow-up, use of vasoactive drugs, and active (endoscopic evidence of active bleeding) or acute bleeding (endoscopic evidence of recent bleeding without active bleeding at the moment).

Risk of bias graph and risk of bias summary are displayed in (Figure 2) and (Figure 3).

Figure 2. Risk of bias graph: review authors' judgements about each risk of bias item presented as percentages across all included studies.



For Preview

Figure 3. Risk of bias summary: review authors' judgements about each risk of bias item for each included study.

	Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias)	Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias)	Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias)	Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Other bias
El Amin 2010	?	+	+	+	+	+	+
Hou 2009	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Lo 2001	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Sarin 2002	+	?	+	?	+	+	?
Tan 2006	+	+	+	+	+	+	?
Zheng 2012	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

Effects of interventions

See: **Summary of findings for the main comparison** Cyanoacrylate 1 mL versus cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension; **Summary of findings 2** Cyanoacrylate vs alcohol for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension; **Summary of findings 3** Cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

1.- Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

One trial comparing two different doses of cyanoacrylate, 0.5 mL versus 1 mL, was used for this analysis (Hou 2009). The respective calculations were made using Fisher's exact test, links to analyses using Revman are also provided.

All-cause mortality at maximum follow-up

Overall mortality from all causes at the end of the observation period was 20 of 44 in the 0.5 mL group and 21 of 47 in the 1 mL group with no statistically significant differences (RR 0.98; 95% CI 0.62 to 1.55)

Bleeding-related mortality

A total of 7 of 44 patients (15.9%) treated with 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate had died by day 30 (bleeding-related mortality) compared with 7 of 47 patients (14.9%) treated with 1 mL. Relative risk analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.94; 95% CI 0.36 to 2.45) (Analysis 1.1).

Failure of intervention

A total of 13 of 44 patients (29.5%) treated with 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate presented continuous bleeding after the procedure compared with 13 of 47 patients (27.6%) treated with 1 mL. Relative risk analysis showed not statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.94; 95% CI 0.49 to 1.79) (Analysis 1.3).

Re-bleeding

In 17 of 44 patients (38.6%) treated with 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate, re-bleeding occurred during the defined time after procedure, compared with 14 of 47 patients (29.8%) treated with 1 mL. Relative risk analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.77; 95% CI 0.43 to 1.37) (Analysis 1.4).

Adverse events

12 of 44 patients (27.2%) treated with 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate presented fever after the procedure compared with 23 of 47 patients (48.9%) treated with 1 mL. Relative risk analysis showed statistically significant differences between groups (RR 1.79; CI 95% CI 1.02 to 3.15) (Analysis 1.5).

One patient suffered a pulmonary embolism in the 0.5 mL group. One patient in each group suffered portal vein thrombosis.

Control of bleeding

In 9 of 10 patients with active bleeding (90%) treated with 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate, bleeding was controlled compared with 13 of 15 patients (86.6%) treated with 1 mL. Relative risk analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.96; 95% CI 0.72 to 1.28) (Analysis 1.6).

Number of transfusions

A total of 4.42 units were used in the 0.5 mL group of cyanoacrylate compared with 4.11 units used in the 1 mL. weighted mean difference analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups ($p = 0.68$)

Quality of life

Not reported in the trial

TIPS and surgery

Both procedures offered to patient in case of failure, but actual numbers were not provided.

2.- Cyanoacrylate versus. Alcohol-based compounds

One randomised trial (Sarin 2002) was used for comparing cyanoacrylate versus alcohol-based compounds. All calculations were made using Fisher's exact test, link to analyses using Revman are also provided

All-cause mortality

Not reported in the trial

Bleeding-related mortality

Regarding mortality (bleeding related mortality) 2 of 20 patients (10%) died after 30 days in the cyanoacrylate group versus 4 of 17 (23.5%) in the alcohol-based compounds group. Relative risk analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.43; 95% CI 0.09 to 2.04) (Analysis 2.1).

Failure of intervention

In 2 of 9 patients (22.2%) cyanoacrylate failed to control bleeding (only patients with acute bleeding were considered for this analysis) versus 5 of 8 (62.5%) in the alcohol-based compounds group. Relative risk analysis showed a no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.36; 95% CI 0.09 to 1.35) (Analysis 2.2).

Re-bleeding

Five of 20 patients (25%) presented re-bleeding (defined as bleeding one to four weeks after first treatment) using cyanoacrylate versus 5 of 17 (29.4%) using alcohol-based compounds. Relative risk analysis showed no significant differences between groups (RR 0.85; 95% CI 0.30 to 2.45) (Analysis 2.3).

Adverse events

A total of 7 of 20 patients (35%) had post-procedure fever in the cyanoacrylate group during the observation period versus 14 of 17 (82.3%) in the alcohol group. Differences between groups were statistically significant (RR 0.43; 95% CI 0.22 to 0.80) (Analysis 2.4). No cases of distant embolism were reported.

Control of bleeding

Control of gastric variceal bleeding was achieved in 19 of 20 patients (95%) using cyanoacrylate versus 9 of 17 patients (52.9%) using alcohol-based compounds. Differences between groups were statistically significant (RR 1.79; 95% CI 1.13 to 2.84) (Analysis 2.6; Analysis 2.7).

Number of transfusions

Not reported in the trial.

Quality of life

Not reported in the trial.

TIPS and surgery

Use of TIPS were not reported. 4 of 8 (50%) patients in the acute variceal bleeding patients underwent surgery in the alcohol group compared with 1 of 9 patients in the cyanoacrylate group. Differences between groups were not statistically significant (RR 0.22; 95% CI 0.03 to 1.6).

3.- Cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation (EBL)

Four trials were used for comparing cyanoacrylate versus EBL (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; El Amin 2010; Zheng 2012).

All-cause mortality

One trial reported all-cause mortality (Lo 2001), whereas there are no complete data in the others.

Bleeding-related mortality

A total of 44 of 185 patients (23.7%) using cyanoacrylate died during the observation period compared with 50 of 181 patients (27.6%) using EBL. Random-effects model meta-analysis failed to find statistically significant differences between groups (RR 0.83; 95% CI 0.52 to 1.31). There was evidence of internal heterogeneity ($I^2 = 29\%$) (Analysis 3.1).

Subgroup analyses

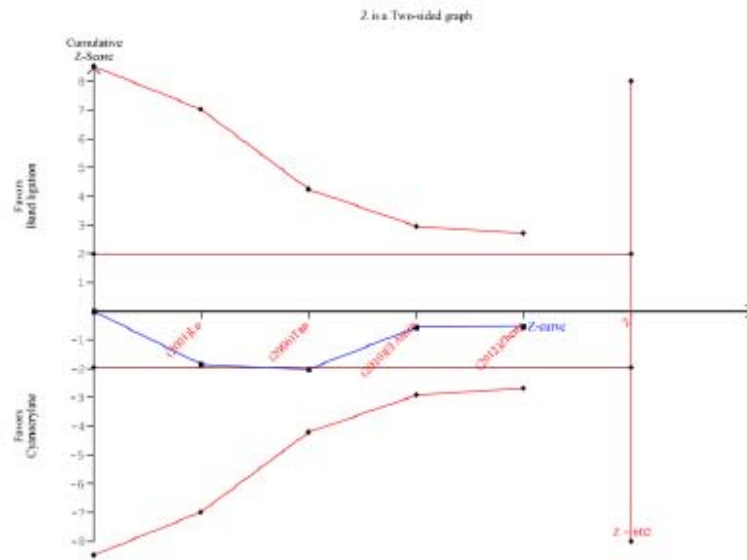
Results were similar when only full-text articles were taken into account. They did not reflect superiority for cyanoacrylate although heterogeneity did go up (RR 0.81; 95% CI 0.47 to 1.41; $I^2 = 46\%$) (Analysis 3.2). When trials were stratified by low selection bias only, cyanoacrylate was favoured, almost reaching statistical significance and with little evidence of heterogeneity (RR 0.76; 95% CI 0.57 to 1.01; $I^2 = 0\%$) (Analysis 3.3). Results were no different when controlling for GOV1 type only varices, or when taking into account only trials that included patients with hepatocarcinoma (Analysis 3.4). Trials using vasoactive drugs showed a lower mortality rate for cyanoacrylate, although results were not statistically significant (Analysis 3.5). When stratifying by length of follow-up, there were no differences between shorter or longer follow-up periods.

Trial sequential analyses

The trial sequential analysis showed that the heterogeneity-adjusted relative risk estimate required an information size (HALBRIS) of 602 patients. The cumulative Z curve crossed slightly the conventional boundary after the second low-bias trial (56 patients), but not the alpha-spending boundary, favouring cyanoacrylate. The curve then diminishes with the addition of the

two no low-bias trials. This small superiority is likely to be due to random error (Figure 4). In the trial sequential analysis using an α error of 1% and a β error of 10% (HALBRIS 818), the cumulative Z curve did not cross any of the boundaries using low and no low-bias trials, showing that none of the interventions reached superiority and that the limits of futility were not reached.

Figure 4. Trial sequential analysis. Cyanocrylate versus endoscopic band ligation: outcome mortality



Failure of intervention

In 9 of 135 patients (6.6%) with acute bleeding, cyanoacrylate failed to arrest bleeding compared with 8 of 129 patients (6.2%) using EBL. Random-effects model meta-analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 1.13; 95% CI 0.23 to 5.69) with moderate evidence of internal heterogeneity ($I^2 = 53\%$) (Analysis 3.6).

When taking into account only full-text papers, the results were very similar, and without statistically significant differences (RR 0.73; 95% CI 0.14 to 3.65; $I^2 = 47\%$) (Analysis 3.7). When trials were stratified by low selection bias only, results favoured cyanoacrylate although without reaching statistical significance and with little evidence of heterogeneity (RR 0.33; 95% CI 0.10 to 1.14; $I^2 = 0\%$) (Analysis 3.8). This last results came also from the two trials that treated all types of varices and that included patients with hepatocarcinoma.

Subgroup analyses

Trial sequential analyses

There is insufficient data to conduct TSA analysis.

Re-bleeding

Re-bleeding occurred in 33 of 183 patients (18 %) using cyanoacrylate versus 53 of 177 patients (29.9 %) using EBL. Random-effects model meta-analysis showed a statistically significant difference between groups (RR 0.60; 95% CI 0.41 to 0.88) with little evidence of internal heterogeneity ($I^2 = 6\%$) (Analysis 3.9).

Subgroup analyses

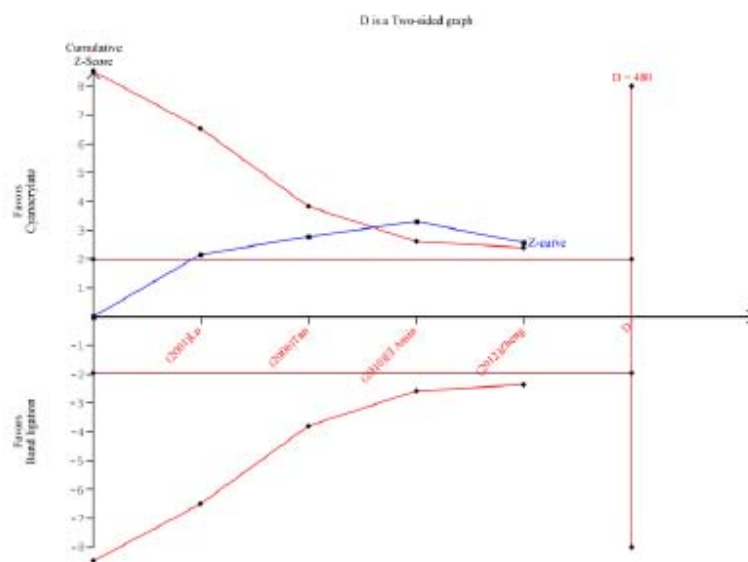
When only full-text articles were taken into account there was a small increase in the benefit of cyanoacrylate, reaching statistical significance and displaying lower heterogeneity (RR 0.52; 95% CI 0.35 to 0.78; $I^2 = 0\%$) (Analysis 3.10). When only trials with low risk of selection bias were taken into account, the analysis also favoured cyanoacrylate (RR 0.54; 95% CI 0.35 to 0.85; $I^2 = 0\%$) (Analysis 3.11). Stratified by type of varices, the results favoured cyanoacrylate for all types and GOV1-only type of varices, almost reaching statistical significance (Analysis 3.12). Stratified by use of vasoactive drugs, trials not using them achieved better results for

cyanoacrylate (Analysis 3.13). Regarding length of follow-up, both the shorter trials and the longer trials showed statistical significance in favour of cyanoacrylate.

Trial sequential analyses

The trial sequential analysis showed that the heterogeneity-adjusted relative risk estimate required an information size (HALBRIS) of 480 patients. The cumulative Z curve crossed the conventional boundary after the first low-bias trial (55 patients), and approached the alpha spending monitoring boundary after the second low-bias trial (155 patients). This line was crossed after the third (no low-bias) trial (302 patients). These results show the superiority of cyanoacrylate when it comes to preventing re-bleeding, but if only the two low-bias trials are taking into account, this superiority could be likely due to random error. However, when trials with high risk of bias are added, this superiority is unlikely to be due to random error (Figure 5). Trial sequential analysis using an α error of 1% and a β error of 10% (HALBRIS 644) showed superiority for cyanoacrylate, which did not cross the alpha spending monitoring boundary (low and not low-bias trials), suggesting that superiority at that level could be due to random error.

Figure 5. Trial sequential analysis: Cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation: outcome re-bleeding



Adverse events

A total of 45 of 155 patients (29 %) who received cyanoacrylate presented some form of complication (complications were defined differently in each trial, therefore we used total number of complications) compared with 17 of 152 patients (11.1 %) using EBL. Random-effects model meta-analysis showed fewer complications in the band ligation group, although statistical significance was not achieved (RR 2.81; 95% CI 0.69 to 11.49) and there was high evidence of internal heterogeneity ($I^2 = 80\%$) (Analysis 3.14). This data came only from full-text papers because information associated with complications was not available in the paper found only in abstract form.

Subgroup analyses

When trials were stratified by low selection bias only, random-effects model meta-analysis yielded no statistically significant differences between groups and lower heterogeneity (RR 1.81; 95% CI 0.34 to 9.78; $I^2 = 62\%$) (Analysis 3.15). Stratified by use of vasoactive drugs, band ligation showed fewer complications, though without reaching statistical significance (Analysis 3.16). Embolism to distal organs, which is the major complication associated with cyanoacrylate, occurred only in one of the patients that participated in all the trials included (EBL group).

Control of bleeding

Control of gastric variceal bleeding was achieved in 125 of 135 patients (92.5 %) using cyanoacrylate versus 108 of 129 patients (83.7 %) using EBL. Random-effects model meta-analysis showed no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 1.07;

95% CI 0.90 to 1.27) with major evidence of internal heterogeneity ($I^2 = 78\%$) (Analysis 3.17).

Subgroup analyses

When only full-text articles were taken into account, there were not statistically significant differences between groups either, although heterogeneity was lower (RR 1.11; 95% CI 0.91 to 1.36; $I^2 = 55\%$) (Analysis 3.18). When trials were stratified to low selection bias only, there were no statistically significant differences between groups (RR 1.33; 95% CI 0.52 to 3.39; $I^2 = 86\%$), although there was a substantial increase in heterogeneity (Analysis 3.19). This last analysis came from the two trials that treated all types of varices and included patients with hepatocarcinoma as well. Lastly, when trials were stratified according to use of vasoactive drugs, there were better results for cyanoacrylate in the absence of vasoactive drugs, although statistical significance was not achieved (Analysis 3.20).

Number of transfusions

Only two trials reported number of transfusions (Lo 2001; Tan 2006), whereas there are no complete data in the others.

Quality of life

Not reported in any trial.

TIPS and surgery

TIPS and surgery were offered in case of treatment failure, but actual numbers were not provided.

ADDITIONAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *[Explanation]*

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Patient or population: acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Settings:

Intervention: cyanoacrylate

Control: absolute alcohol

Outcomes	Illustrative comparative risks* (95% CI)		Relative effect (95% CI)	No of Participants (studies)	Quality of the evidence (GRADE)	Comments
	Assumed risk	Corresponding risk				
	Control: absolute alcohol	Intervention: cyanoacrylate				
Mortality	Study population		RR 0.43 (0.09 to 2.04)	37 (1 study)	⊕⊕○○ low ¹	Small numbers, no intention-to-treat
Total deaths at 30 days	235 per 1000	101 per 1000 (21 to 480)				
Follow-up: mean 14 months	Moderate					
	235 per 1000	101 per 1000 (21 to 479)				
Failure of Intervention	Study population		RR 0.36 (0.09 to 1.35)	17 (1 study)	⊕⊕○○ low ²	Small number of cases.
Follow-up: mean 1 days	625 per 1000	225 per 1000 (56 to 844)				
	Moderate					
	625 per 1000	225 per 1000 (56 to 844)				

Evidence of the effect of cyanoacrylate versus alcohol for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension
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Complications (fever) Presence of fever Follow-up: mean 14 months	Study population	RR 0.43 (0.22 to 0.8)	37 (1 study)	⊕⊕○○ low³	Small number of cases
	824 per 1000	354 per 1000 (181 to 659)			
	Moderate				
	824 per 1000	354 per 1000 (181 to 659)			
Re-bleeding Re-bleeding after intervention Follow-up: 1-4 weeks	Study population	RR 0.85 (0.3 to 2.45)	37 (1 study)	⊕⊕○○ low⁴	Small number of cases
	294 per 1000	250 per 1000 (88 to 721)			
	Moderate				
	294 per 1000	250 per 1000 (88 to 720)			
Control of bleeding Success in controlling the active variceal bleeding Follow-up: mean 14 months	Study population	RR 1.79 (1.13 to 2.84)	37 (1 study)	⊕⊕○○ low^{5,6}	Small number of cases
	529 per 1000	948 per 1000 (598 to 1000)			
	Moderate				
	529 per 1000	947 per 1000 (598 to 1000)			

³The basis for the **assumed risk** (e.g. the median control group risk across studies) is provided in footnotes. The **corresponding risk** (and its 95% confidence interval) is based on the assumed risk in the comparison group and the **relative effect** of the intervention (and its 95% CI).
 CI: Confidence interval; RR: Risk ratio;

For P... On

GRADE Working Group grades of evidence

High quality: Further research is very unlikely to change our confidence in the estimate of effect.

Moderate quality: Further research is likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and may change the estimate.

Low quality: Further research is very likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and is likely to change the estimate.

Very low quality: We are very uncertain about the estimate.

¹ Small number of cases. No sample size calculations and no Intention-to-treat declared

² Small number of cases. No Intention-to-treat declared

³ Small number of cases. No Intention-to-treat declared

⁴ Small number of cases. No Intention-to-treat declared

⁵ Small number of cases. No Intention-to-treat declared

⁶ Small number of cases. No Intention-to-treat declared

Cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic band ligation for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension						
Patient or population: patients with Acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension Settings: Intervention: cyanoacrylate Control: endoscopic band ligation						
Outcomes	Illustrative comparative risks* (95% CI)		Relative effect (95% CI)	No of Participants (studies)	Quality of the evidence (GRADE)	Comments
	Assumed risk	Corresponding risk				
	Control: endoscopic band ligation	Intervention: cyanoacrylate				
Mortality Total of deaths and the end of follow-up. Follow-up: 6 - 14 months	Study population		RR 0.83 (0.52 to 1.31)	365 (4 studies)	⊕⊕○○ low ^{1,2}	Counts for the total deaths at the end of follow-up. Includes 30-day-mortality (not available for all trials, mortality from bleeding, and other causes)
	278 per 1000	231 per 1000 (144 to 364)				
	Moderate					
	277 per 1000	230 per 1000 (144 to 363)				
Failure of Intervention Continuous variceal bleeding after intervention Follow-up: mean 1 days	Study population		RR 1.13 (0.23 to 5.89)	264 (4 studies)	⊕⊕○○ low ^{2,3}	The numbers represents only the trials considering active bleeding at the moment of intervention
	62 per 1000	70 per 1000 (14 to 353)				
	Moderate					
	40 per 1000	45 per 1000 (9 to 228)				

Re-bleeding Re-bleeding after the bleeding was controlled in the first intervention Follow-up: mean 7 days	Study population	RR 0.6 (0.41 to 0.88)	360 (4 studies)	⊕⊕○○ low	Trial sequential analysis suggested that cyanoacrylate superiority was not likely to be due to random error	
	299 per 1000					180 per 1000 (123 to 264)
	Moderate					
	326 per 1000	196 per 1000 (134 to 287)				
Complications (general) Number of total complications Follow-up: 6 - 14 months	Study population	RR 2.81 (0.69 to 11.49)	307 (3 studies)	⊕⊕○○ low²	There is heterogeneity between trials about the complications detected. The two common complications (and the assessed ones) are pain and fever	
	112 per 1000					314 per 1000 (77 to 1000)
	Moderate					
	67 per 1000	188 per 1000 (46 to 770)				
Control of bleeding Success in control variceal bleeding Follow-up: mean 30 days	Study population	RR 1.07 (0.9 to 1.27)	264 (4 studies)	⊕⊕○○ low	Mixed risk of bias and small total numbers	
	837 per 1000					896 per 1000 (753 to 1000)
	Moderate					
	873 per 1000	934 per 1000 (786 to 1000)				

*The basis for the **assumed risk** (e.g. the median control group risk across studies) is provided in footnotes. The **corresponding risk** (and its 95% confidence interval) is based on the assumed risk in the comparison group and the **relative effect** of the intervention (and its 95% CI).
 CI: Confidence interval; RR: Risk ratio;

GRADE Working Group grades of evidence
High quality: Further research is very unlikely to change our confidence in the estimate of effect.
Moderate quality: Further research is likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and may change the estimate.
Low quality: Further research is very likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and is likely to change the estimate.
Very low quality: We are very uncertain about the estimate.

¹ Total number of events is 233, and the total sample size is 264.

² Publication bias was expected to calculate in the number of assessed trials were over 10.

³ There is little variation in the base line risks across the included trials

DISCUSSION

The present review compared the effects of endoscopic sclerotherapy with cyanoacrylate versus endoscopic sclerotherapy with alcohol-based compounds and endoscopy band ligation in adult patients with active and/or acute gastric variceal bleeding. Two different doses of cyanoacrylate were also compared.

One of the main findings of this review is that there are few controlled clinical trials available on the endoscopic treatment of gastric varices. This is due to several factors, including low prevalence of this type of varices compared to oesophageal varices (Korula 1991; Sarin 1992). This can explain the fact that after several years, even the largest centres had treated only a limited number of gastric varices, generally below the required number of patients needed to fulfil sample size calculations requirements associated with research projects. In addition, given that bleeding associated with gastric varices is usually severe, decisions must be made based on conditions that may vary greatly between centres, e.g. ability to perform therapeutic endoscopies, availability of resources, expertise of the attending physician, and a series of patient-dependent variables such as basal disease, degree of severity of the underlying hepatic disease and their complications, and/or existence of hepatocellular carcinoma and/or portal vein thrombosis (many of them are reported factors that cause more severe variceal bleeding). Other variables include but are not limited to size and type of the varices, (IGV being more ominous than GOV), and pre- and post-endoscopy treatments, such as use of different resuscitation schemes, use of vasoactive drugs, proton pump inhibitors, and the liberal or restrictive use of blood transfusions. As a result, the available trials on gastric varices are scarce and heterogeneous. Blinding of personnel is not feasible for endoscopic interventions, but given the objective nature of the outcomes associated with this treatment, lack of blinding probably does not increase the risk of bias.

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

Only one randomised trial (Hou 2009) was found that compared different doses of cyanoacrylate. This study, free of major biases, shows that both 0.5 and 1 mL doses of cyanoacrylate were similar in terms of reducing mortality, treatment failure, bleeding control and preventing re-bleeding. However, there were less reported adverse effects (only minor) in the 0.5 mL group. The fundamental characteristic of this comparison lies in the amount of cyanoacrylate present inside each varix after each injection, since the total amount used depends on the number of varices, their size and the success controlling bleeding and achieving obliteration. Although the total amount of cyanoacrylate administered vary among included studies, in this specific study the total dose of cyanoacrylate used when the 1 mL dose was applied, was only 0.5 mL more compared when using 0.5 mL. Other studies (not comparing different doses) used up to double this amount in individual injections of 0.5 mL (Lo 2001; Sarin 2002). The final issue when dealing with

varying the amount of cyanoacrylate in each injection is the capacity of the injected cyanoacrylate to obliterate the entire varix, and the likelihood that cyanoacrylate could enter the blood stream and cause an embolism. The former complication occurred only in one patient (with the lesser dose) in (Hou 2009), and was observed rarely in the remaining trials of this review (Lo 2001; Tan 2006). Other small adverse effects were more common with the higher dosage. Since these results came from only one trial (Hou 2009) which had in total 91 patients, it is therefore difficult to draw firm conclusion on dosage of cyanoacrylate.

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol:

Alcohol-based compounds (ethanolamine maleate, absolute alcohol and polidocanol) have been used for many years for the management of oesophageal varices (Grace 1997; Sarin 1997; Garcia-Tsao 2007; Garcia-Tsao 2008). They lost popularity with the advent of endoscopic band ligation, which showed comparative advantages (Laine 1995). Alcohol-based compounds were never too common in the management of gastric varices, due to the large size of these varices and the need of large volumes of alcohol-based compounds for treatment (such as in the study included in this review). Their efficacy compared with other endoscopy treatments in randomised (Sarin 2002) and non-randomised trials showed less efficacy in controlling acute bleeding, as well as higher incidences of re-bleeding, (Schuman 1987; Gimson 1991; Oho 1995; Ogawa 1999).

Only one randomised trial (Sarin 2002), with unclear bias risk, was available for comparing cyanoacrylate versus absolute alcohol. This study shows that cyanoacrylate is superior to absolute alcohol in terms of bleeding control and adverse events, but with no differences in mortality, failure to control bleeding, and prevention of re-bleeding. There were no reported baseline differences between intervention groups regarding prognostic factors such as the inclusion of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma, severity of liver disease, or use of vasoactive drugs. It must be highlighted also that these results came from only one trial with 37 patients, which were furthermore divided into patients with acute and active bleedings, which makes it difficult to draw any firm conclusions on this comparison.

Cyanoacrylate versus band ligation:

Several non randomized publications discussed the advantages of cyanoacrylate over endoscopic band ligation, controlling bleeding and preventing re-bleeding and mortality (Takeuchi 1996; Huang 2000; Akahoshi 2002; Kim 2006; Sugimoto 2007; Mishra 2010). However the randomized controlled trials included in this revision that studied this same comparison (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; El Amin 2010; Zheng 2012) reported improvement only in prevention of re-bleeding. They showed no advantages of cyanoacrylate in terms of decreasing mortality and complications, better control of acute bleeding, or eradication or obliteration of varices.

These randomized controlled trials, presented similar trial designs, sclerotherapy procedures for cyanoacrylate and band ligation, grades of liver compromise according to the Child-Pugh classification, and outcome measures between trials. There were, nevertheless some differences that could compromise the results of this review. The first one has to do with the type of gastric varices. It is known that type I gastric varices (GOV or cardiac varices) are always associated with oesophageal varices, and could be a continuation of the oesophageal variceal column, which is in clear contrast with gastric varices type II (IGV1, fundal or isolated varices) which are separated and often found without the presence of concomitant oesophageal varices. IGV1 varices could present more severe bleeding than GOV1 according to the literature. In this review, one of the four trials comparing cyanoacrylate with band ligation dealt exclusively with GOV1 varices (El Amin 2010). The remaining three trials dealt with all types of gastric varices (Lo 2001; Tan 2006; Zheng 2012). When stratification was done separating trials with all types of varices and the cardiac type alone trial (El Amin 2010), both treatments fared similarly and without statistically significant differences, suggesting that when it comes to prevention of re-bleeding, type of varices is irrelevant. Mortality, however, increases when cyanoacrylate is used in GOV1 varices, and when band ligation is used in IGV1 varices. The random-effects meta-analysis showed a significant difference in prevention of re-bleeding in favour of cyanoacrylate, which increased with stratified analyses calculated separately using full-text articles/abstracts and trials with low/unclear risk of bias.

Use of vasoactive drugs could also bias the results: they were used in two trials (Tan 2006, Zheng 2012) and not used in two (Lo 2001; El Amin 2010). Stratification yielded no statistically differences. These studies have a low number of participants, which make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions from them.

Lastly, length of follow-up was different in the included trials, varying from 6 to 26 months. This could skew results, particularly when short-term trials (Lo 2001; El Amin 2010) are compared with long-term trials (Tan 2006). Given the nature of the disease, re-bleeding and mortality could be under represented in short-term trials and over represented in long-term trials. Nonetheless, we observed no differences long and short-term trials.

Data regarding units of blood used were available from only two trials (Lo 2001; Tan 2006), with a trend that suggest lesser usage in the cyanoacrylate group. Re-bleeding was significantly lower also in these two trials.

Future work is needed in order to clarify these points, including the completion of studies with large numbers of patients and proper stratification of severity of the basic disease, type and size of varices, presence of hepatocarcinoma and use of vasoactive drugs. It would also be important to standardize measurements related to time to acute bleeding, re-bleeding, and mortality rates due to bleeding. In the meantime, and in light of the results of this review, it seems sensible to use cyanoacrylate in the treatment of gastric varices, particularly IGV1 varices, although treatment with band ligation

is also an option, mainly for GOV1 type varices.

It must be noted that the results of the comparisons between cyanoacrylate and band ligation came from studies that had 365 patients in total. The superiority of cyanoacrylate to prevent re-bleeding seems to be a real effect and not due to random error. The worst possible adverse effect associated with the use of cyanoacrylate, embolism, was rarely presented (in one case embolism was observed in the non-cyanoacrylate group). There were a few minor adverse effects especially in the band ligation group.

Summary of main results

Taken in to account overall low quality of the evidence (small number of patients included in the studies identified in this review, which implies significant imprecision, many trials with high risk of bias, and heterogeneity) our results suggest that, when treating gastric varices, it is reasonable to recommend cyanoacrylate in doses of 0.5 mL. Additionally cyanoacrylate appears to be superior to alcohol-based compounds. Lastly, cyanoacrylate appears to be superior to band ligation in terms of re-bleeding, particularly in IGV1 type varices, but fairly similar regarding bleeding control, treatment failure, and mortality.

Overall completeness and applicability of evidence

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

Based on only one trial comprising 91 patients, 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate seems to be more effective and associated with fewer complications than 1 mL of cyanoacrylate. The evidence identified was not enough to accomplish the objectives of the review on this issue. The proposed dose of 0.5 mL of cyanoacrylate is the dose most used in the current practice.

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol

Based on only one trial comprising 37 patients, cyanoacrylate seems to be better than sclerotherapy with alcohol-based compounds for decreasing mortality, arresting bleeding and reducing complications. However, the evidence identified was not enough to achieve the objectives of the review on this issue.

Cyanoacrylate versus band ligation

Based on four trials comprising 365 patients, the use of cyanoacrylate seems to be superior to endoscopic band ligation only in terms of preventing re-bleeding, particularly in IGV1 varices. Band ligation could still be a viable treatment, particularly in GOV1 type varices. The evidence identified was not complete to reach the objectives of the review on this point, specially due to heterogeneity and low quality of the evidence, although results in the outcome

re-bleeding seems to be robust. The lower risk of re-bleeding is the main reason to prefer the use of cyanoacrylate over the use of band ligation in the current practice.

Quality of the evidence

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

Data for this analysis came from only one trial of low quality (GRADE). The evidence identified does not allow a robust conclusion regarding this issue.

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol

Data for this analysis came from only one trial of low quality (GRADE), unclear risk of bias which did not report sample size calculation or intention-to-treat analysis. This trial included very few patients, who were separated into two groups (acute and active bleeding). The evidence identified does not allow a robust conclusion regarding this review objective.

Cyanoacrylate versus band ligation

The results came from three full-text trials and one abstract. The full-text trials have low risk of bias, but rated as low quality (GRADE) due to small numbers of participants, presence of subgroups and some heterogeneity. The abstract are of low quality (GRADE) and has high risk of bias. From the several outcomes studied, the meta-analysis was able to demonstrate differences in favour of cyanoacrylate in only one outcome (rebleeding). The identified evidence does not allow a robust conclusion regarding several objectives of this review, but concerning the outcome re-bleeding, trial sequential analysis suggests that cyanoacrylate superiority was not likely to be due to random error.

Potential biases in the review process

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

The only included trial for this comparison seems to be free of major bias. No other trial dealing with this question was found. Literature search was comprehensive. Some trials in different language than English, French or Spanish (abstracts or articles) could be missed. Not all the planned outcomes were present in the assessed trial.

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol

The only included trial presents unclear risk of bias, and the number of patients treated is too small. There are several observational studies dealing with this comparison but no other randomised trial was located with a comprehensive literature search. Some trials in different language than English, French or Spanish (abstracts or articles) could be missed. Not all the planned outcomes were present in the assessed trial.

Cyanoacrylate versus band ligation

One potential source of bias was the inclusion of an article in abstract form for this comparison (Zheng 2012). It was not possible to retrieve all the needed data, from the respective study, despite several attempts to contact the authors. The results for this comparison were calculated with and without this trial, and also stratified according to the possible selection bias and the differences were mainly not statistically significant. Heterogeneity was low to moderate, although there were many differences between trials regarding type of varices, use of vasoactive drugs, and inclusion of patients with hepatocarcinoma. Time to defined outcomes was also different across included studies. Literature search was comprehensive but, some trials in different language than English, French or Spanish (abstracts or articles) could be missed.

Agreements and disagreements with other studies or reviews

Two different doses of cyanoacrylate

There seem to be no major disagreements with other studies on this matter. Most of the included trials use cyanoacrylate in shoots of 0.5 mL.

Cyanoacrylate versus alcohol-based compounds

There are non-randomised trials and case series that compare cyanoacrylate with alcohol-based compounds (Schuman 1987; Gimson 1991; Oho 1995; Sarin 1997; Ogawa 1999). These studies report that alcohol-based compounds are associated with inferior results regarding initial haemostasis, incidence of re-bleeding, varix obliteration, and complications. The results of this review are consistent with these studies. There are no studies that conclude that alcohol-based compounds are better than cyanoacrylate for any outcome of interest.

Cyanoacrylate versus band ligation

There are non-randomised trials and case series on different methods of band ligation using the classic, new or combined techniques (Chun 1995; Cipolletta 1998; Shiha 1999; Yoshida 1999; Lee 2002; Arakaki 2005). Their results are more optimistic than,

but consistent with those of this review. There are no studies that conclude that band ligation is superior to cyanoacrylate for any outcome.

AUTHORS' CONCLUSIONS

Implications for practice

Taking into account that there were only one randomised trial each for different doses of cyanoacrylate and for comparison with alcohol-based compounds, and four randomised trial for comparison with EBL, this systematic review suggests that endoscopic sclerotherapy with cyanoacrylate may be considered the primary option for treating active or acute bleeding from gastric varices, particularly the isolated (IGV1) type, using doses of 0.5 mL each, due to their lower re-bleeding rates, being equally the EBL in other outcomes. Severe complications such as embolism to distal organs seem to occur rarely. EBL seems to be a viable treatment for all types of gastric varices, especially the cardiac (GOV1) type, although with an expected increase in incidence of re-bleeding rates. Despite the small amount of evidence-based data, this review suggests that alcohol-based compounds should not be the primary option for gastric varices. Use of vasoactive drugs does not seem to influence any outcome when used together with an endoscopic procedure.

Implications for research

Large, long-term, randomised trials that compare cyanoacrylate versus band ligation for active or acute gastric variceal bleeding in adult patients are needed. These studies should include all types of gastric varices, patients with hepatocellular carcinoma, consider the use of vasoactive drugs, and use standardized time-to-measure outcomes.

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* Indicates the major publication for the study

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDIES

Characteristics of included studies *(ordered by study ID)*

El Amin 2010

Methods	<p>N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate vs band ligation (EBL) for acute bleeding from junctional gastric varices (GOV1), Jan 2008 - Sep 2009</p> <p>Generation of allocation sequence: Unclear (randomisation done by assistant); concealment of allocation sequence, sealed opaque envelopes</p> <p>Blinding: Patients and personnel not blinded.</p> <p>Intention-to treat: No</p> <p>Interim analysis: None</p> <p>Follow-up period: 6 months</p>	
Participants	<p>Egypt. Three centre trial.</p> <p>150 patients, randomised in to 75 in each group.</p> <p>Active bleeding from GOV1 only gastric varices probed by endoscopy</p> <p>Cirrhosis of the liver (mostly post-viral hepatitis).</p> <p>Treatment done 24 hours after admission</p> <p>Similar demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups</p> <p>Same general treatment (blood, frozen plasma, fluids, antibiotics and lactulose) for the two groups</p>	
Interventions	<p>Experimental.- Cyanoacrylate group: 0.5 mL cyanoacrylate + 0.7 mL lipiodol. 21-gauge needle. Intravariceal injection</p> <p>Control.- EBL group: Band ligation, six shooter</p> <p>Concurrent oesophageal varices for both groups: EBL in the same session</p> <p>Num of sessions to eradicate: GVO: 1.3 ± 0.6; GVL: 2.3 ± 0.7</p> <p>Follow-up endoscopy: every 2 weeks by same method until obliteration</p> <p>Follow-up post obliteration: Every 6 months</p> <p>Treatment of re-bleeding: Same as first session</p>	
Outcomes	<p>Initial haemostasis</p> <p>Survival time</p> <p>Complications</p> <p>Death</p> <p>Re-bleeding</p> <p>Treatment failure</p>	
Notes	<p>All adverse effects were informed</p> <p>Gastric varices were limited to type GOV1</p> <p>One case randomised to EBL was switched to cyanoacrylate upon failure</p> <p>We attempted to contact the authors (07/23/13), with no response</p>	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Bias	Authors' judgement	Support for judgement

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Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Unclear risk	Method not described
Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Low risk	Concealment: consecutively numbered opaque sealed envelopes. "Eligible patients were randomised into two groups using consecutively numbered opaque-sealed envelopes containing the treatment assignment to receive either endoscopic variceal ligation or endoscopic cyanoacrylate injection". pp 280
Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Patients were not blinded. Methods of blinding personnel were not described. The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Not described. The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias) All outcomes	Low risk	No loss of follow-up. Treatment completed by protocol 100%. Figure 1: Trial profile, pp 280
Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Low risk	All primary (initial haemostasis) and secondary (survival time, complications and death) end points were measured and informed, pp 281, Table 2 and Table 3 and Figure 2, pp 283
Other bias	Low risk	One case randomised to GBL was switched to cyanoacrylate upon failure "except one case in the EVL group where cyanoacrylate was used as a rescue procedure to control bleeding", pp 283

Hou 2009

Methods	Two different doses of N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate for active bleeding from gastric varices of all types (0.5 mL vs 1 mL). September 2005 to August 2007 Generation of allocation sequence: Generated by computer-allocated random digits; concealment of allocation sequence, sealed opaque envelopes Blinding: Patients not blinded. Trained nurses and physicians blinded to group assignment conducted the assessments Intention-to-treat: Yes Interim analysis: None Follow-up period: 26 months
Participants	Taiwan. Single centre randomised controlled trial 91 patients, randomised to 44 and 47 in each group. Active bleeding from all types of gastric varices probed by endoscopy Cirrhosis of the liver (diagnosed by needle biopsy or clinical, biochemical and radiology) with or without hepatocarcinoma Treatment within 24 hrs from bleeding. Similar demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups Same general treatment (terlipressin and somatostatin ASAP, plus antibiotics and esomeprazole for the two groups)
Interventions	Experimental: 0.5 mL cyanoacrylate plus 1.3 mL Lipiodol. 23-gauge needle. Intravariceal injection Control: 1 mL cyanoacrylate plus 1.8 mL Lipiodol. 23 gauge needle. Intravariceal injection Concurrent oesophageal varices: EBL 3 -4 weeks after intervention Nurn of session to eradicate: -Experimental: < 4 injections. -Control:< 4 injections Follow-up endoscopy: every 3 - 4 weeks by same method until obliteration Follow-up post-obliteration: Every 3 months Treatment of re-bleeding: Same as first session
Outcomes	Control of active bleeding Treatment failure Re-bleeding Mortality Complications
Notes	All adverse effects were informed. All types of gastric varices We attempted to contact the authors (07/23/13), with no response

Risk of bias

Bias	Authors' judgement	Support for judgement
Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Low risk	Generated by computer-allocated random digits "Patients who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were randomised by using consecutively numbered envelopes that contained

		the treatment assignment, which were generated by a system using computer-allocated random digits", pp 669
Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Low risk	Consecutively numbered envelopes "Patients who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were randomised by using consecutively numbered envelopes that contained the treatment assignment, which were generated by a system using computer-allocated random digits", pp 669
Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Patients were not blinded Methods of blinding personnel were not described The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Trained nurses and physicians blinded to group assignment conducted the assessments "Well-trained nurses and physicians blinded to group assignment conducted the assessments", pp 670
Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Intention-to-treat analysis with 2 losses in experimental group and 3 losses in control group at late stage. "The results were analyzed based on intent-to-treat analysis" and (Figure 1) pp 670
Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Low risk	All pre-defined outcomes (arresting of active bleeding, re-bleeding, complications and mortality were measured. Description of outcomes in methods match up to those in results, pp 671-672
Other bias	Low risk	The trial appears to be free of other components that could put it at risk of bias

Lo 2001

Methods	N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate vs band ligation (EBL) for active bleeding from gastric varices of all types. July 1996 - Dec.1999 Generation of allocation sequence: Table of random numbers; concealment of allocation sequence, sealed opaque envelopes Blinding: Patients not blinded. Randomisation done by assistant Intention-to-treat: Yes Interim analysis: One after three years that reached significance Follow-up period: 14 months in cyanoacrylate, 9 months in GBL Time to treatment: Endoscopy within 3 hours
Participants	Republic of China. Single centre randomised controlled trial 60 patients, randomised in to 29 and 31 in each group. Active and recent bleeding from all types of gastric varices diagnosed by endoscopy Cirrhosis of the liver (Biopsy, clinical, laboratory, imaging) Treatment made 3 hours after admission Similar demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups Same general treatment (blood, frozen plasma, fluids, antibiotics and lactulose, not NSBB) for the two groups
Interventions	Group A: EBL. 29 patients. Pneumatic ligation device, over tube 1 - 4 bands.11 active bleeding / 18 recent Group B: Cyanoacrylate 31 patients. 0.5 mL Cyanoacrylate, 1.5 Lipiodol. 2 - 4 mL. At bleeding point. 15 active bleeding / 16 recent Concurrent oesophageal varices for both groups: EBL immediately after, same session Follow-up endoscopy: 3 -4 week until obliteration Follow-up after obliteration: 6 months. Teratment of re-bleeding: Same intervention as original group
Outcomes	Initial haemostasis (> 72 hrs). Re-bleeding (> 72 hrs). Complications. Mortality. Treatment failure.
Notes	Mixed patients with acute and past history of bleeding. All adverse effects were informed. All types of gastric varices We attempted to contact the authors (07/23/13), with no response

Risk of bias

Bias	Authors' judgement	Support for judgement
Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Low risk	Table of random numbers. "Eligible patients were randomised into 2 groups, using opaque sealed envelopes numbered according to a table of random numbers", pp1060

Lo 2001 (Continued)

Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Low risk	Opaque sealed envelopes. "Eligible patients were randomised into 2 groups, using opaque sealed envelopes numbered according to a table of random numbers", pp 1060
Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Randomisation made by assistant. "randomization was performed by an assistant, and endoscopic treatment was administered at once", pp 1060
Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Patients were not blinded. Methods of blinding personnel were not described. The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Intention-to-treat. "Statistical analyses of both the groups were based on the "intention-to-treat" principle", pp 1061 After 3 years interim analysis reached significant differences with the enrolled patients Loss of follow-up: One in each group. "The mean follow-up period was 14 months in the GVO group and 9 months in the GVL group. One patient in each group was lost to follow-up", pp 1061
Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Low risk	All primary (initial haemostasis) and secondary (re-bleeding) outcomes were measured. (Figure 1). Description of outcomes in methods match up to those in results
Other bias	Low risk	Trial seems to be free of other possible bias.

Sarin 2002

Methods	N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate vs absolute alcohol for active or recent bleeding from isolated (IGV1 or GOV2) gastric varices. 1995 - 1998 Generation of allocation sequence: Table of random numbers; concealment of allocation sequence: not described Blinding: Patients and personnel not blinded. Intention-to-treat: No Interim analysis: None. Follow-up period: 14 months.
Participants	India. Single centre randomised controlled trial. 37 patients, 17 in the alcohol group, 20 in the cyanoacrylate group Active or acute bleeding from IGV1 or GOV2 only gastric varices probed by endoscopy Portal hypertension. Treatment made after admission. Similar demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups Same general treatment: Vasoactive drugs (somatostatin or octreotide 48- 120 hrs after admission)
Interventions	Experimental: Cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL plus lipiodol 0.7 mL. 21-gauge needle. 1.2 - 4.6 ml Control: Absolute alcohol group, 21-gauge needle. 2 - 9 paravariceal injections and 1 - 3 intravariceal, 0.5 - 1 mL each Concomitant oesophageal varices: Only isolated varices were treated. Esophageal was non-existent or small. There was no treatment for them Number of sessions to eradicate: Cyanoacrylate: 2.0 ± 1.6. Alcohol: 4.7 ± 3.2 Follow-up endoscopy: Every week until obliteration. Follow-up post-obliteration: Every 3 - 6 weeks. Treatment for re-bleeding: Emergency endoscopy, same method 2 failures: Emergency rescue surgery
Outcomes	Control active bleeding Variceal obliteration Re-bleeding Mortality Failure of treatment Complications
Notes	Mixed acute and past bleeding Only isolated varix was chosen (GOV2 and IGV1 were considered isolated varices)

Risk of bias

Bias	Authors' judgement	Support for judgement
Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Low risk	Table of random numbers after initial endoscopy "Patients were randomised using a table of random numbers immediately at the time of the initial endoscopy", pp 1011

Sarin 2002 (Continued)

Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Unclear risk	Not described
Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Not described The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias) All outcomes	Unclear risk	Not described The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias) All outcomes	Low risk	No losses of follow-up are described
Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Low risk	All primary (success controlling bleeding, obliteration and re-bleeding) and secondary (time for obliteration, recurrence and bleeding related mortality) outcomes were described. Description of outcomes in methods match up to those in results, pp 1012, tables 1 and 3, pp 1012 - 1013
Other bias	Unclear risk	Only isolated varix Mixed acute and past bleeding Intention-to-treat not declared By convenience. No-sample size calculation

Tan 2006

Methods	N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate vs band ligation (EBL) for active or recent bleeding from gastric varices of all types. July 1996 to June 2002 Generation of allocation sequence: Computer-allocated random digit numbers; concealment of allocation sequence, sealed opaque envelopes Blinding: Patients and personnel not blinded. Nurses and physicians blinded to treatment for assessment Intention-to-treat: Yes. Modified intention-to-treat analysis Interim analysis: None. Follow-up period: 6 months
Participants	Country: Taiwan. Single centre randomised controlled trial 97 patients, randomised in 49 and 48 in each group Mixed between acute and active bleeding from all types of gastric varices. Diagnosed by endoscopy Cirrhosis of the liver (Biopsy, clinical, laboratory, imaging) HCC; cytohistologic, liver biopsy, two imaging plus AFP > 400 Treatment made < 24 hours after admission Similar demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups Same general treatment: Vasoactive drugs (terlipressin or somatostatin before diagnosis)

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	and PPI post-intervention)
Interventions	<p>Experimental: 49 patients. 0.5 mL Cyanoacrylate, 0.5mL lipiodol. No more than 6 shots. 15 active bleeding / 33 acute</p> <p>Control: EBL 48 patients. Pneumatic ligation device, no more than 10 bands in each session. Bleeding point first. 15 active bleeding / 33 acute</p> <p>Concurrent oesophageal varices: EBL immediately after, same session</p> <p>Num of sessions to eradicate: Cyanoacrylate 1.5 \pm 0.7. EBL 1.8 \pm 1.4</p> <p>Follow-up endoscopy: 3 months, if unremarkable 6 months</p> <p>Every 6 months after obliteration or death</p> <p>Treatment of re-bleeding: Same intervention as original group</p>
Outcomes	<p>Control of active bleeding</p> <p>Re-bleeding</p> <p>Mortality</p> <p>Complications</p> <p>Treatment failure</p>
Notes	<p>Mixed between acute and active</p> <p>Hepatocellular carcinoma included.</p> <p>4 patients switched from EBL to cyanoacrylate</p>

Risk of bias

Bias	Authors' judgement	Support for judgement
Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Low risk	Computer-allocated random digit numbers "consecutively numbered envelopes that contained the treatment assignments, which were generated by a system using computer-allocated random digit numbers", pp 691
Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Low risk	Consecutively numbered envelopes "Patients who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were immediately randomised into the two treatment groups using consecutively numbered envelopes", pp 691
Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Patient and physicians not blinded. The outcome measurement is not likely to be influenced by lack of blinding
Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Nurses and physicians blinded to treatment for assessment "Well-trained nurses and physicians who were blinded to group assignment conducted the assessments", pp 691

Tan 2006 (Continued)

Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias) All outcomes	Low risk	Modified intention-to-treat analysis (all randomised patients with inclusion criteria and at least one time treatment) "Because the study was performed on an emergency basis, enrolment error was inevitable. Therefore, the results were based on modified intention-to-treat (ITT) analysis", pp 692 If switched from groups counted in their original group. Determination of exclusion criteria was made after endoscopy
Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Low risk	All outcomes (control of active bleeding, re-bleeding and mortality), were measured (Figure 1), pp 693
Other bias	Unclear risk	Mixed between acute and active 4 patients switched from EBL to cyanoacrylate. "These four patients undergoing GVL were switched to Histocryl injection because rubber bands could not be deployed on the GV when rebleeding occurred", pp 694

Zheng 2012

Methods	N-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate vs band ligation (EBL) for active bleeding from gastric varices. Abstract only Generation of allocation sequence: unclear; concealment of allocation sequence, unclear Blinding: Patients and personnel: unclear Intention-to-treat: Unclear Interim analysis: Unclear Follow-up period: No data
Participants	Republic of China. Single centre randomised trial 58 adults, bleeding actively from gastric varices Type of gastric varices: No data Cirrhosis of the liver: No data HCC: No data Demographics and clinical characteristics in both groups: No data Same general treatment for both groups: Somatostatin and PPI before intervention
Interventions	Experimental: cyanoacrylate 0.5 mL plus Lipiodol 0.5 mL, injected intra variceally Control: EBL no data.
Outcomes	Bleeding control rate Re-bleeding rate (at two years) Complication rate

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review) 46
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Survival		
Notes	Only abstract available. Full paper was not available. We wrote e-mails to Dr. Bin Wu, MD, PhD, Professor and Chief, Department of Gastroenterology, The Third Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou (02/19/2013), and to the organization of the VL-Conference: Asian Pacific Digestive Week 2012 Bangkok Thailand were the abstract was presented to try to contact to the authors with no response	
Risk of bias		
Bias	Authors' judgement	Support for judgement
Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Unclear risk	Randomised trial. No details available (abstract).
Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Unclear risk	No details available (abstract).
Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias) All outcomes	Unclear risk	No details available (abstract).
Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias) All outcomes	Unclear risk	No details available (abstract).
Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias) All outcomes	Unclear risk	No details available (abstract).
Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Unclear risk	No details available (abstract).
Other bias	Unclear risk	Not possible to judge (abstract)

Characteristics of excluded studies [ordered by study ID]

Study	Reason for exclusion
Akahoshi 2002	Design.- Retrospective case series.
Huang 2000	It is not a clinical trial, it is a case series with a long follow-up
Kim 2006	It is not a clinical trial, it is an 86-patient case series
Ljubicic 2011	Randomised control trial of n-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate for oesophageal (not gastric) varices

(Continued)

Maluf - Filho 2001	Mechanisms of action, indications, technique, and results of n-butyl-2-cyanoacrylate endoscopic injection in the treatment of esophageal varices, not gastric ones
Maluf-Filho 2008	It is not a clinical trial, but a 48-patient case series
Mishra 2010	Different objectives: Secondary prophylaxis. All the acute bleeding was treated with the same cyanoacrylate
Mishra 2011	Different objectives: Primary prophylaxis
Ogawa 1999	It is not a clinical trial, a 38-patient case series of cyanoacrylate or ethanalamine
Oho 1995	It is a not randomised clinical trial
Santos 2011	Different objectives. Esophageal varices, not gastric ones
Sugimoto 2007	It is not a clinical trial, but a small case series
Thakeb 1995a	Only 12% of the treated varices were gastric, with oesophageal varices being the 88%

DATA AND ANALYSES

Comparison 1. Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 Total mortality	1	91	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.02 [0.65, 1.60]
2 30 day - mortality	1	91	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.41, 2.80]
3 Failure of intervention	1	91	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.56, 2.05]
4 Re-bleeding	1	91	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.30 [0.73, 2.31]
5 Complications (fever)	1	91	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.56 [0.32, 0.98]
6 Control of bleeding	1	25	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.04 [0.78, 1.38]

Comparison 2. Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 Mortality	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.43 [0.09, 2.04]
1.1 Randomised trial	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.43 [0.09, 2.04]
2 Failure of intervention	1	17	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.36 [0.09, 1.35]
2.1 Randomised trial	1	17	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.36 [0.09, 1.35]
3 Re-bleeding	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.85 [0.30, 2.45]
3.1 Randomised trial	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.85 [0.30, 2.45]
4 Complications (fever)	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.43 [0.22, 0.80]
4.1 Randomised trial	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.43 [0.22, 0.80]
5 Complications (ulceration)	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.79 [0.53, 1.17]
6 Control of bleeding	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.79 [1.13, 2.84]
6.1 Not randomised trial	0	0	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
6.2 Randomised trial	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.79 [1.13, 2.84]
7 Control of bleeding in fundal varices	1	37	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.79 [1.13, 2.84]
8 Control of acute bleeding	1	17	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.42 [0.79, 2.55]

Comparison 3. Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 Mortality	4	365	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.83 [0.52, 1.31]
2 Mortality stratified by full papers or abstracts	4	365	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.83 [0.52, 1.31]
2.1 Full trials	3	307	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.81 [0.47, 1.41]
2.2 Abstracts only	1	58	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.4 [0.25, 7.77]

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review)
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3 Mortality stratified by selection bias	4	365	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.70 [0.49, 0.99]
3.1 Low risk bias	2	157	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.76 [0.57, 1.01]
3.2 Unclear risk bias	2	208	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.58 [0.16, 2.12]
4 Mortality stratified by type of gastric varices	4	365	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.83 [0.52, 1.31]
4.1 Type GOV only	1	150	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	5.0 [0.60, 41.78]
4.2 All types of gastric varices	3	215	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.77 [0.58, 1.02]
5 Mortality stratified by use of vasoactive drugs	4	365	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.83 [0.52, 1.31]
5.1 With use of vasoactive drugs	2	155	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.82 [0.60, 1.11]
5.2 Without use of vasoactive drugs	2	210	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.38 [0.16, 11.67]
6 Failure of intervention	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.13 [0.23, 5.69]
7 Failure stratified by full papers or abstracts	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.73 [0.14, 3.65]
7.1 Full papers	3	206	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.73 [0.14, 3.65]
7.2 Abstracts only	1	58	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
8 Failure stratified by selection bias	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.73 [0.14, 3.65]
8.1 Low risk bias	2	56	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.33 [0.10, 1.14]
8.2 Unclear risk bias	2	208	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	3.0 [0.32, 28.19]
9 Re-bleeding	4	360	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.60 [0.41, 0.88]
10 Re-bleeding stratified by full papers or abstracts	4	360	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.60 [0.41, 0.88]
10.1 Full papers	3	302	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.52 [0.35, 0.78]
10.2 Abstract only	1	58	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.24 [0.49, 3.14]
11 Re-bleeding stratified by selection bias	4	360	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.60 [0.41, 0.88]
11.1 Low selection bias	2	152	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.54 [0.35, 0.85]
11.2 Unclear risk of bias	2	208	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.73 [0.25, 2.15]
12 Re bleeding stratified by type of gastric varices	4	360	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.60 [0.41, 0.88]
12.1 Type GOV varices only	1	150	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.42 [0.15, 1.12]
12.2 All types of gastric varices	3	210	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.65 [0.41, 1.03]
13 Re-bleeding stratified by use of vasoactive drugs	4	360	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.60 [0.41, 0.88]
13.1 With vasoactive drugs	2	155	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.74 [0.32, 1.75]
13.2 Without vaso active drugs	2	205	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.52 [0.30, 0.90]
14 Complications (general)	3	307	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.81 [0.69, 11.49]
15 Complications stratified by selection bias	3	307	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.73 [0.71, 10.50]
15.1 Low risk bias	2	157	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.81 [0.34, 9.78]
15.2 Unclear risk bias	1	150	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	5.17 [2.29, 11.65]
16 Complications stratified by use of vasoactive drugs	3	307	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.81 [0.69, 11.49]
16.1 With use of vasoactive drugs	1	97	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.98 [0.47, 2.04]
16.2 Without use of vasoactive drugs	2	210	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	5.60 [2.46, 12.74]

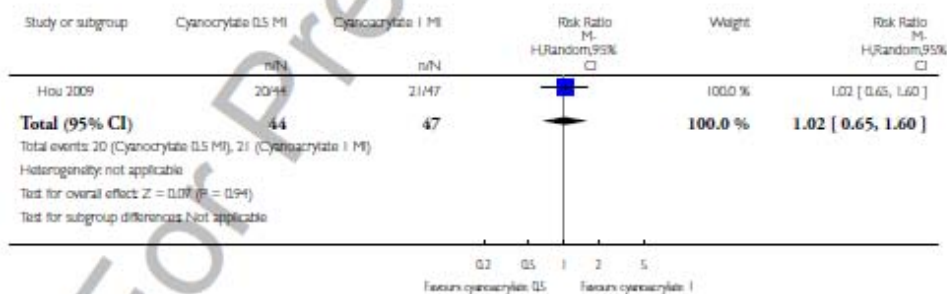
17 Control of bleeding	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.90, 1.27]
18 Control of bleeding stratified by full papers or abstracts	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.90, 1.27]
18.1 Full papers	3	206	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.11 [0.91, 1.36]
18.2 Abstract only	1	58	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.94, 1.07]
19 Control of bleeding stratified by selection bias	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.90, 1.27]
19.1 Low risk of selection bias	2	56	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.33 [0.52, 3.39]
19.2 Unclear risk of selection bias	2	208	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.05 [0.89, 1.24]
20 Control of bleeding stratified by use of vasoactive drugs	4	264	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.90, 1.27]
20.1 Trials with vasoactive drugs	2	88	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.94, 1.06]
20.2 Trials without use of vasoactive drugs	2	176	Risk Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.33 [0.78, 2.27]

Analysis 1.1. Comparison 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate, Outcome 1 Total mortality.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate

Outcome: 1 Total mortality

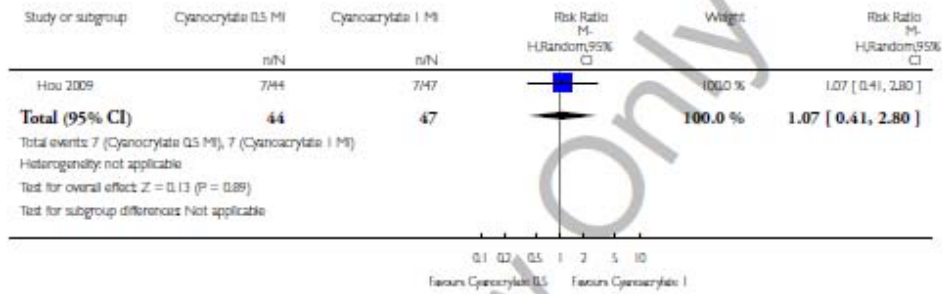


Analysis 1.2. Comparison 1 Two different doses of Cyanocrylate, Outcome 2 30 day - mortality.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 1 Two different doses of Cyanocrylate

Outcome: 2 30 day - mortality

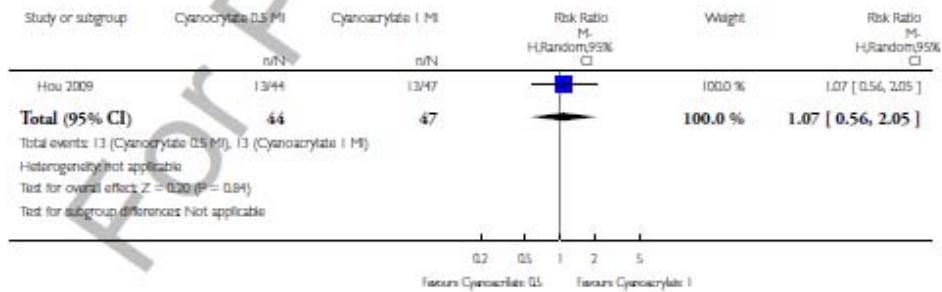


Analysis 1.3. Comparison 1 Two different doses of Cyanocrylate, Outcome 3 Failure of Intervention.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 1 Two different doses of Cyanocrylate

Outcome: 3 Failure of Intervention

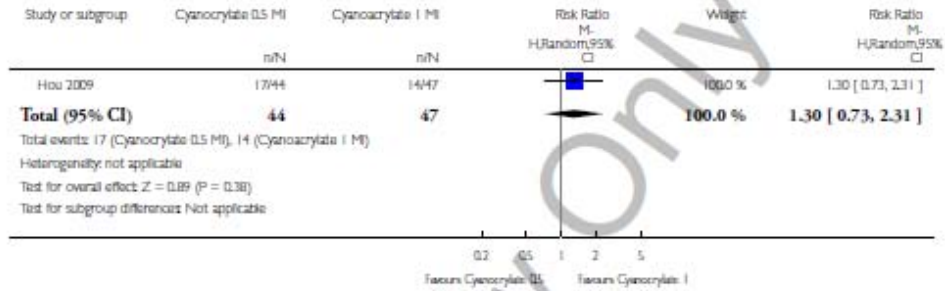


Analysis 1.4. Comparison 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate, Outcome 4 Re-bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparisons: 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate

Outcome: 4 Re-bleeding

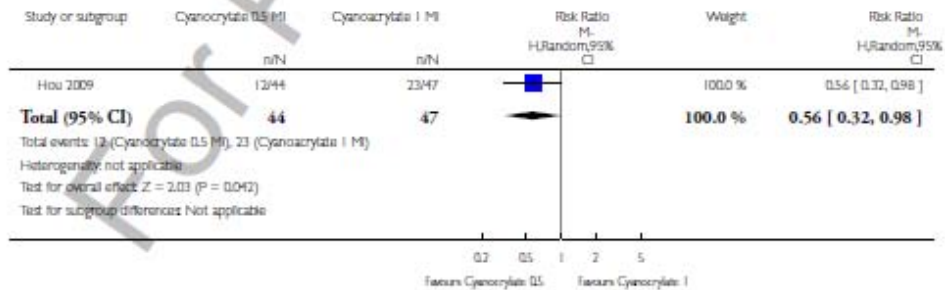


Analysis 1.5. Comparison 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate, Outcome 5 Complications (fever).

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparisons: 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate

Outcome: 5 Complications (fever)

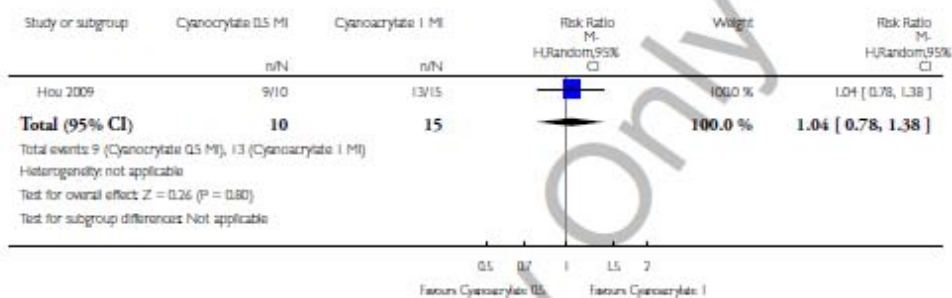


Analysis 1.6. Comparison 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate, Outcome 6 Control of bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 1 Two different doses of Cyanoacrylate

Outcome: 6 Control of bleeding

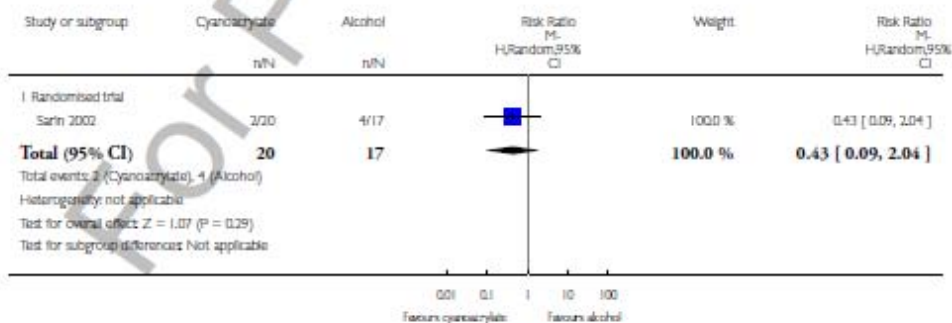


Analysis 2.1. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 1 Mortality.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 1 Mortality

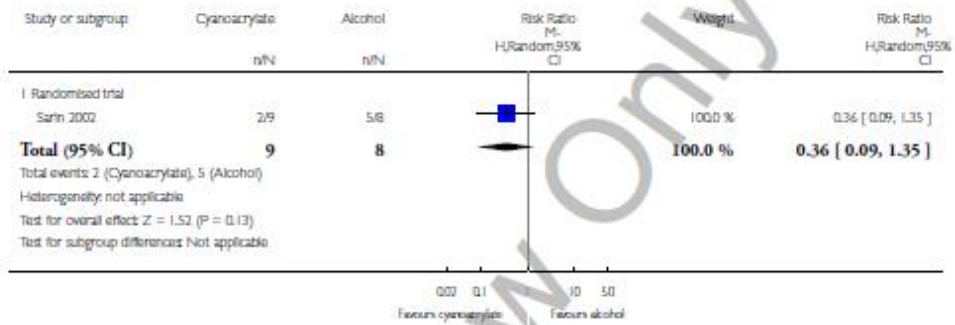


Analysis 2.2. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 2 Failure of Intervention.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 2 Failure of Intervention

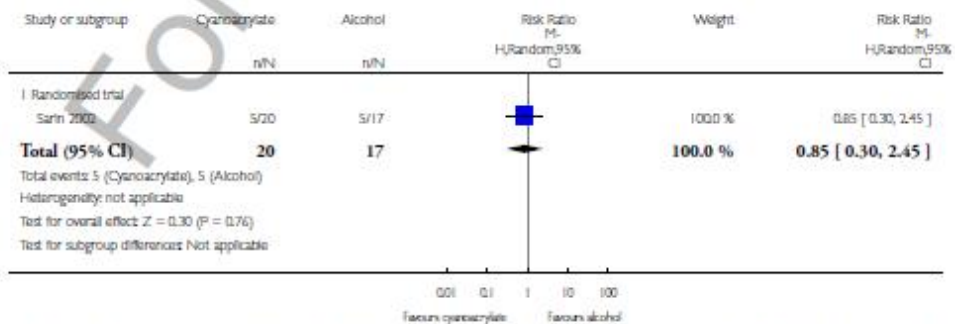


Analysis 2.3. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 3 Re-bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 3 Re-bleeding

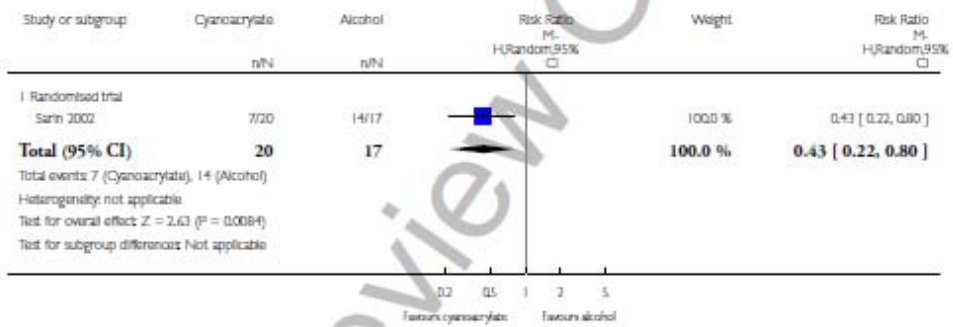


Analysis 2.4. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 4 Complications (fever).

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 4 Complications (fever)

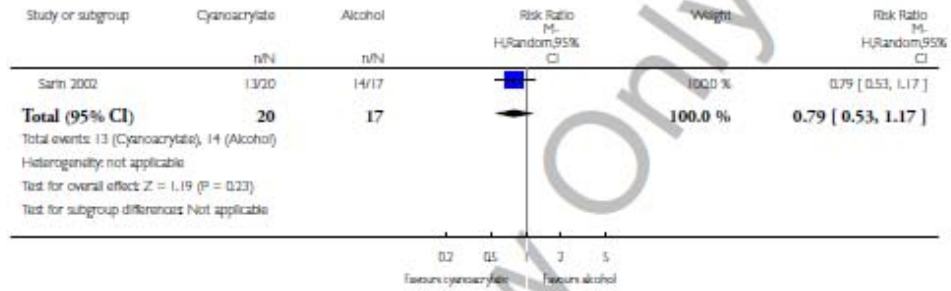


Analysis 2.5. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 5 Complications (ulceration).

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 5 Complications (ulceration)

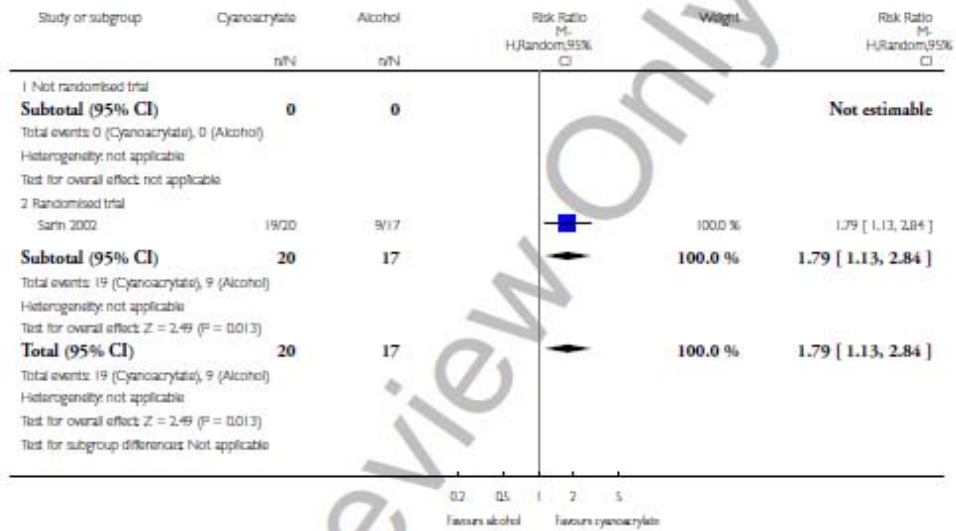


Analysis 2.6. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 6 Control of bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 6 Control of bleeding

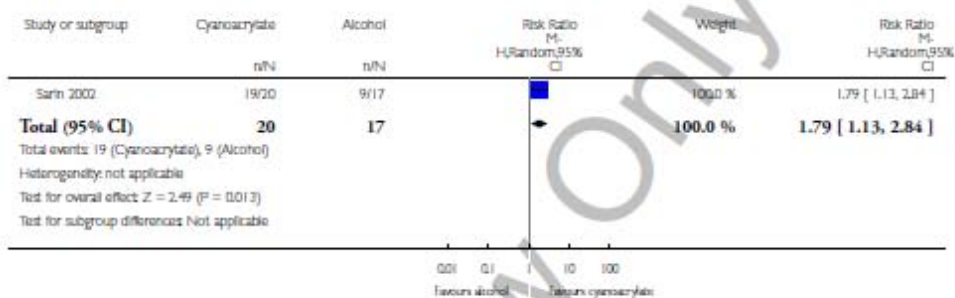


Analysis 2.7. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 7 Control of bleeding in fundal varices.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 7 Control of bleeding in fundal varices

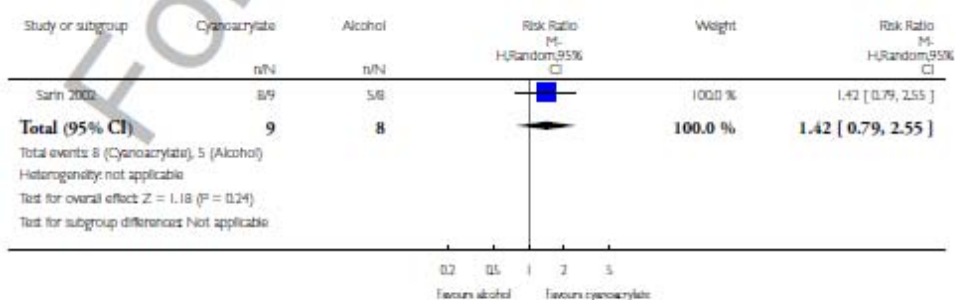


Analysis 2.8. Comparison 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds, Outcome 8 Control of acute bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 2 Cyanoacrylate versus Alcohol-based compounds

Outcome: 8 Control of acute bleeding

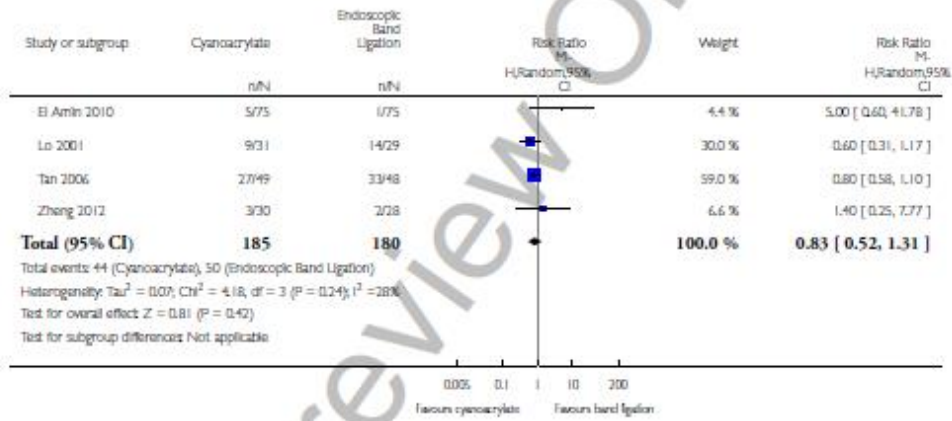


Analysis 3.1. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 1 Mortality.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 1 Mortality

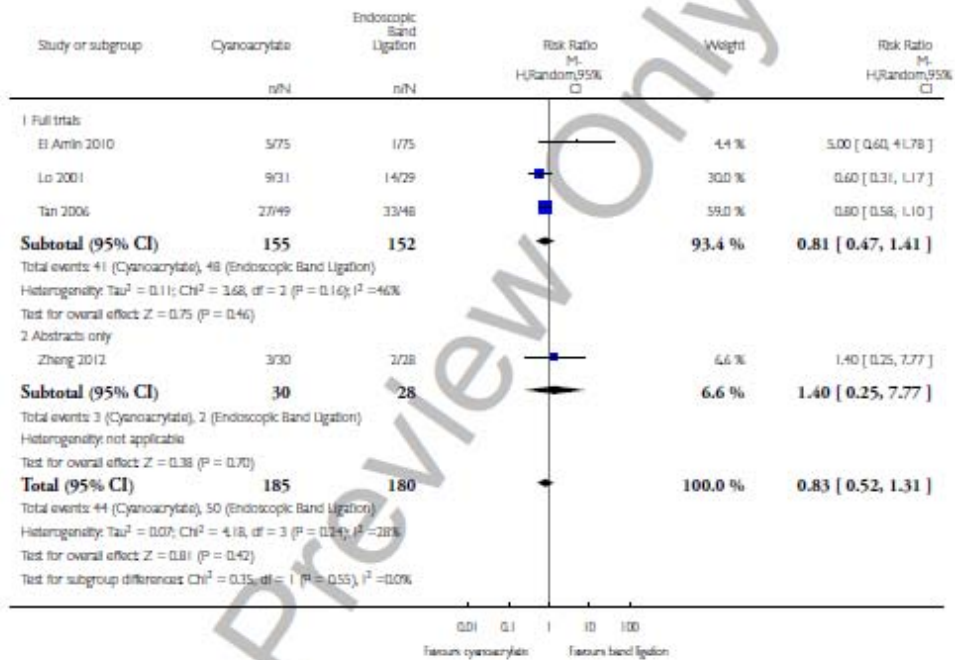


Analysis 3.2 Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 2 Mortality stratified by full papers or abstracts.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 2 Mortality stratified by full papers or abstracts



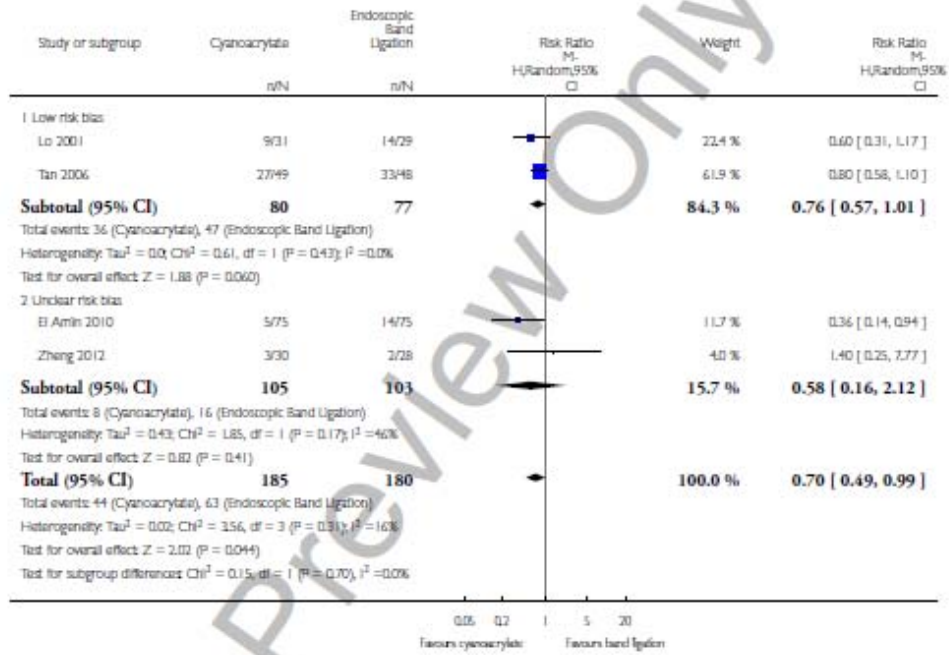
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Analysis 3.3. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 3 Mortality stratified by selection bias.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 3 Mortality stratified by selection bias

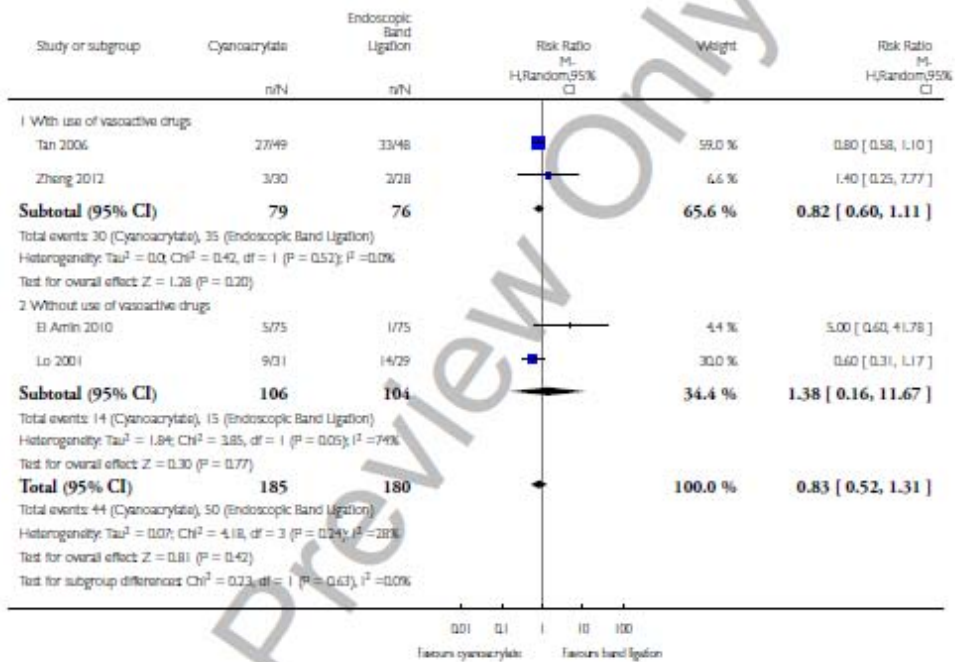


Analysis 3.5. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 5 Mortality stratified by use of vasoactive drugs.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 5 Mortality stratified by use of vasoactive drugs

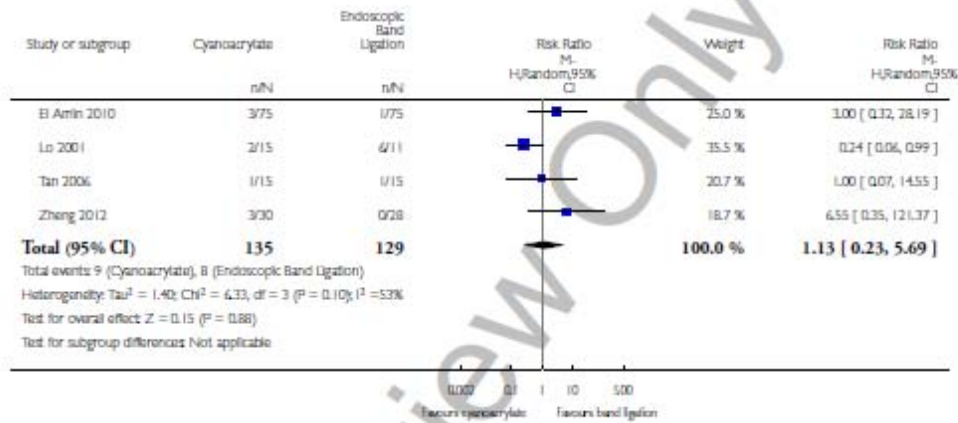


Analysis 3.6. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 6 Failure of Intervention.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 6 Failure of intervention

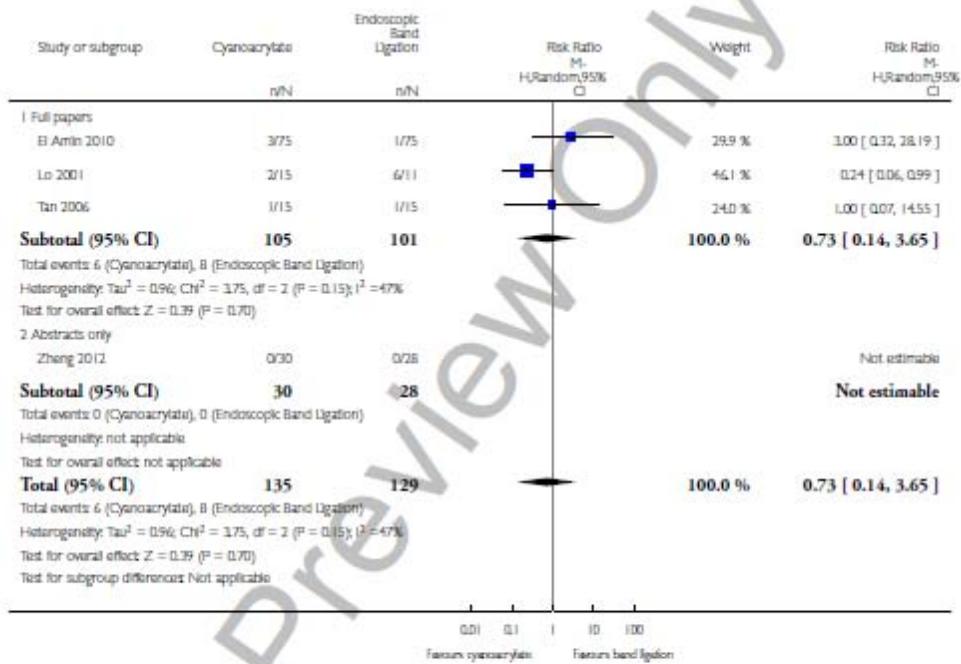


Analysis 3.7. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 7 Failure stratified by full papers or abstracts.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 7 Failure stratified by full papers or abstracts

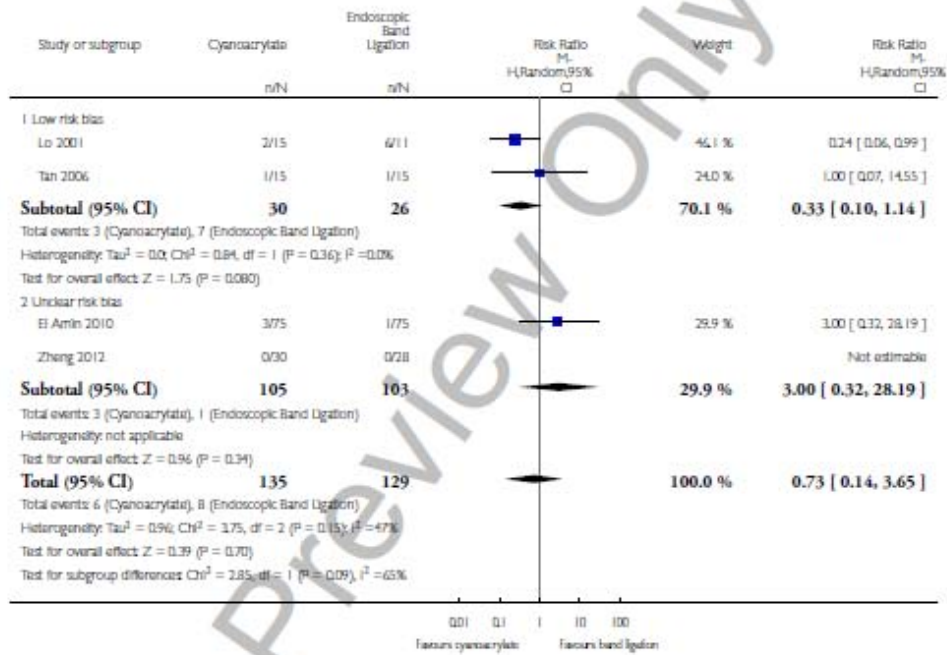


Analysis 3.8. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 8 Failure stratified by selection bias.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 8 Failure stratified by selection bias

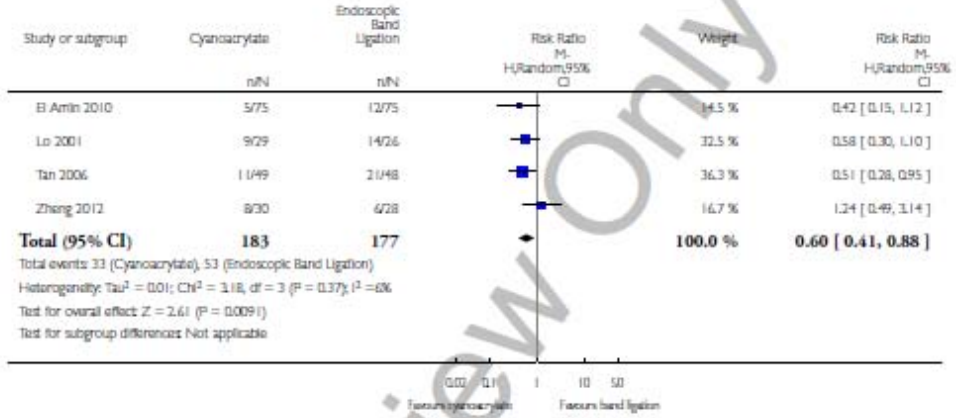


Analysis 3.9. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 9 Re-bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 9 Re-bleeding

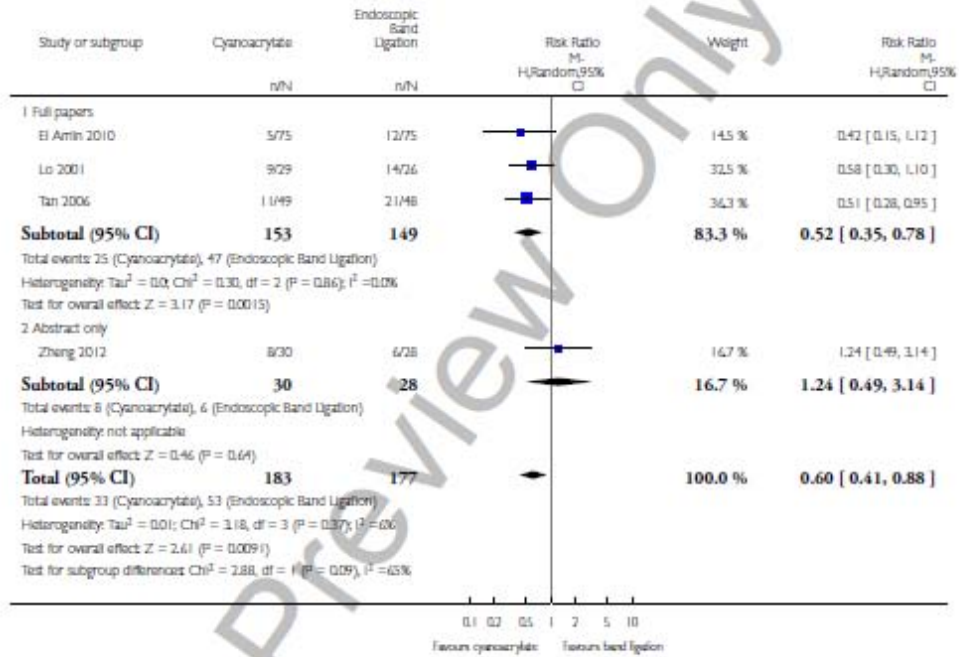


Analysis 3.10. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 10 Re-bleeding stratified by full papers or abstracts.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 10 Re-bleeding stratified by full papers or abstracts

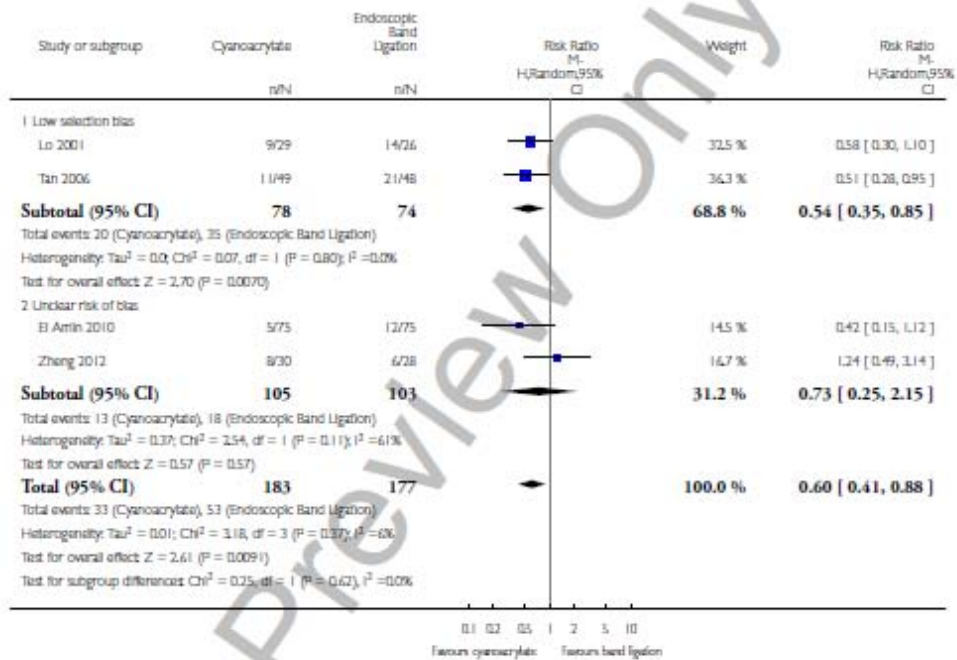


Analysis 3.11. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 11 Re-bleeding stratified by selection bias.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 11 Re-bleeding stratified by selection bias

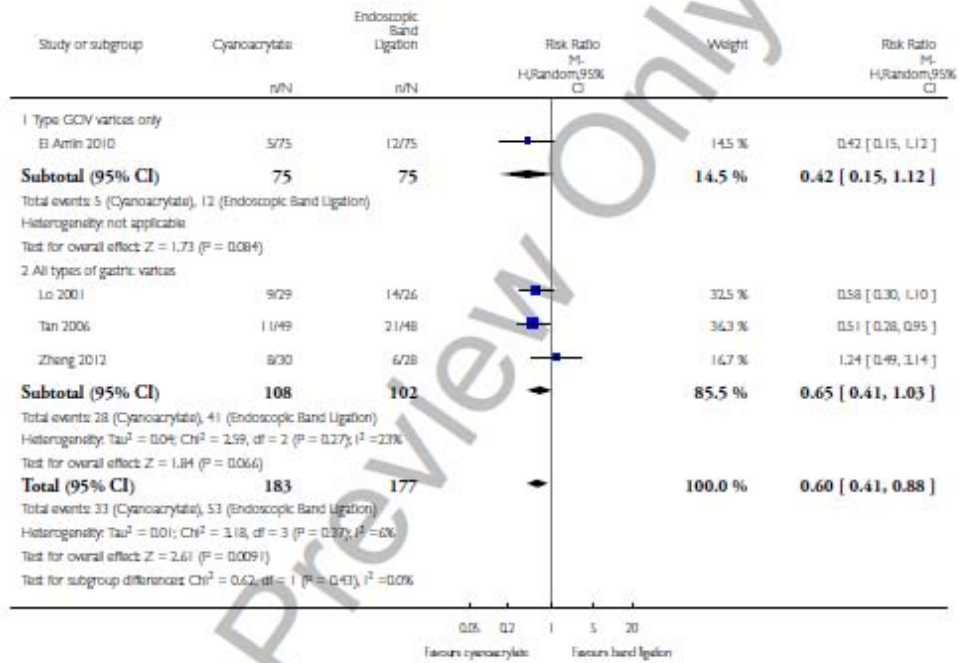


Analysis 3.12. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 12 Re bleeding stratified by type of gastric varices

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 12 Re bleeding stratified by type of gastric varices

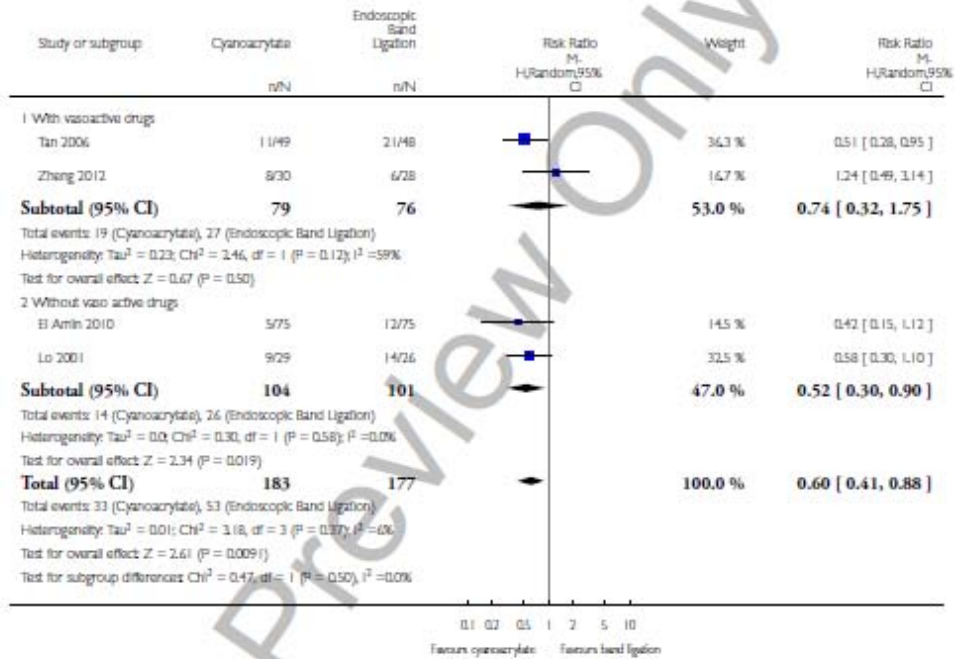


Analysis 3.13. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 13 Re-bleeding stratified by use of vasoactive drugs.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 13 Re-bleeding stratified by use of vasoactive drugs

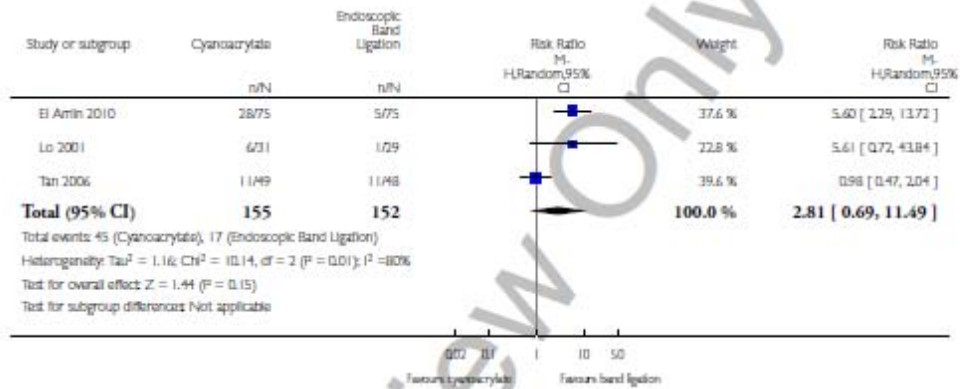


Analysis 3.14. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 14 Complications (general).

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 14 Complications (general)

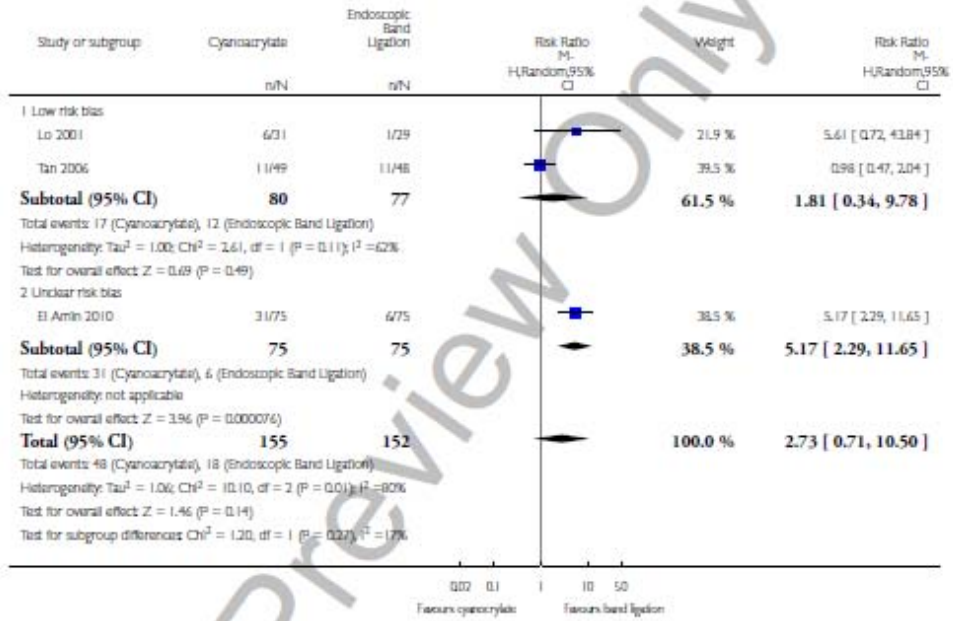


Analysis 3.15. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 15 Complications stratified by selection bias.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 15 Complications stratified by selection bias

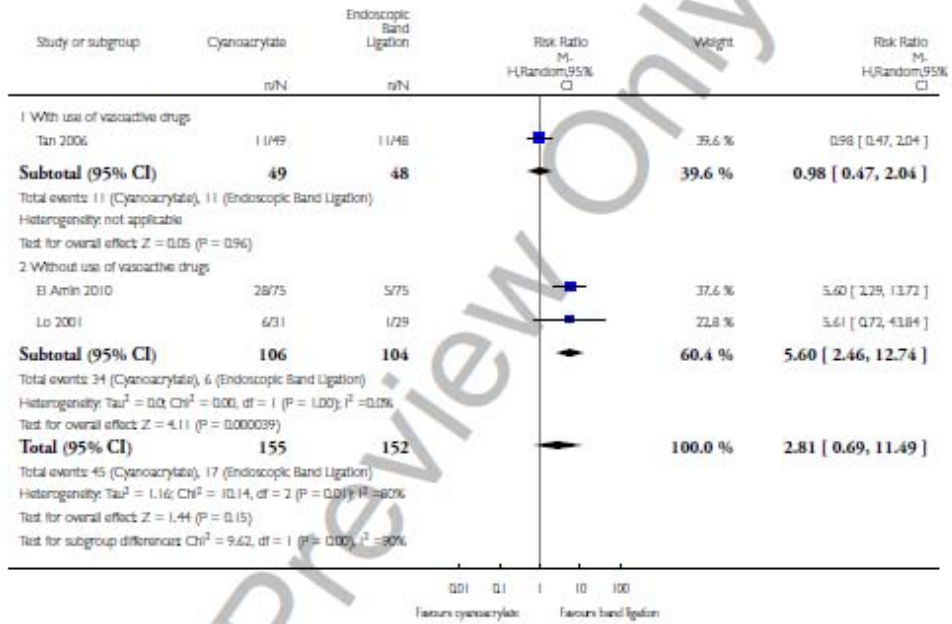


Analysis 3.16. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 16 Complications stratified by use of vasoactive drugs.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 16 Complications stratified by use of vasoactive drugs

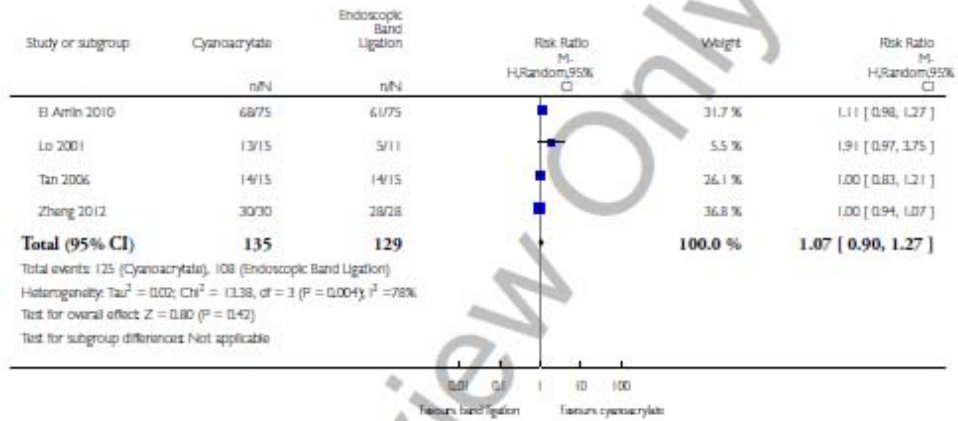


Analysis 3.17. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 17 Control of bleeding.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 17 Control of bleeding

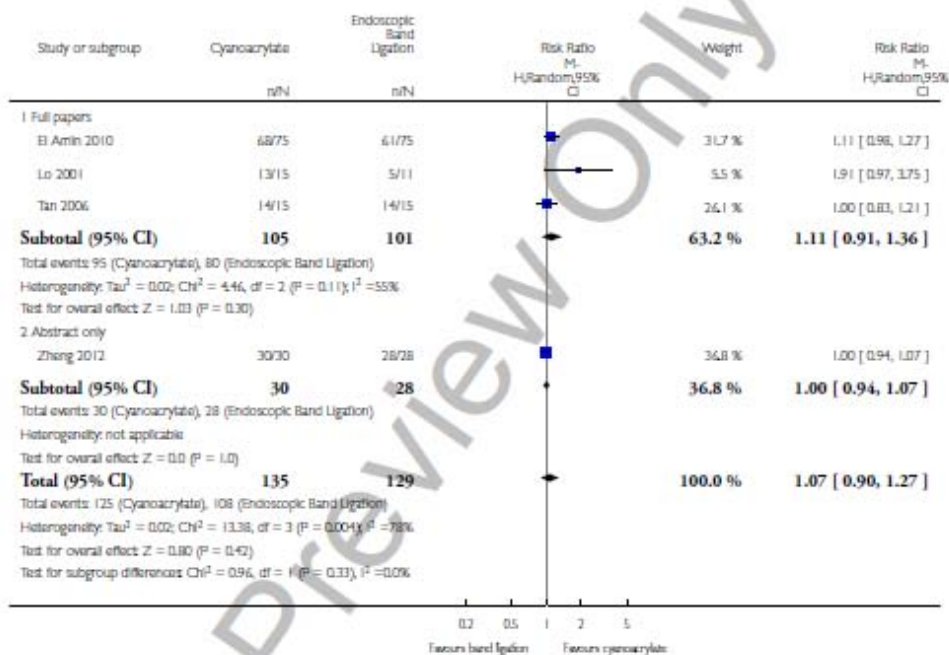


Analysis 3.18. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 18 Control of bleeding stratified by full papers or abstracts.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 18 Control of bleeding stratified by full papers or abstracts

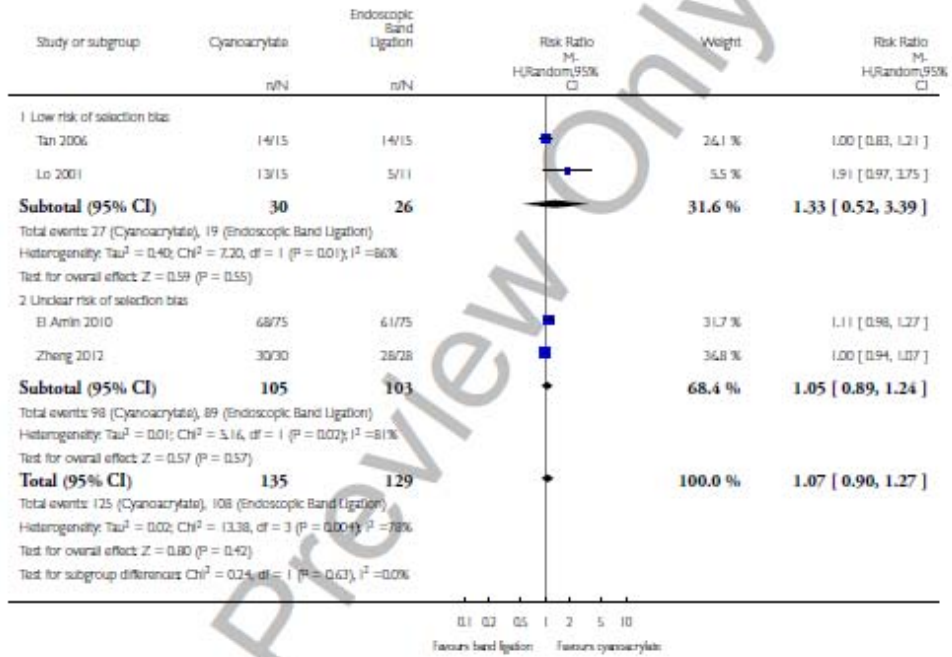


Analysis 3.19. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 19 Control of bleeding stratified by selection bias.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 19 Control of bleeding stratified by selection bias

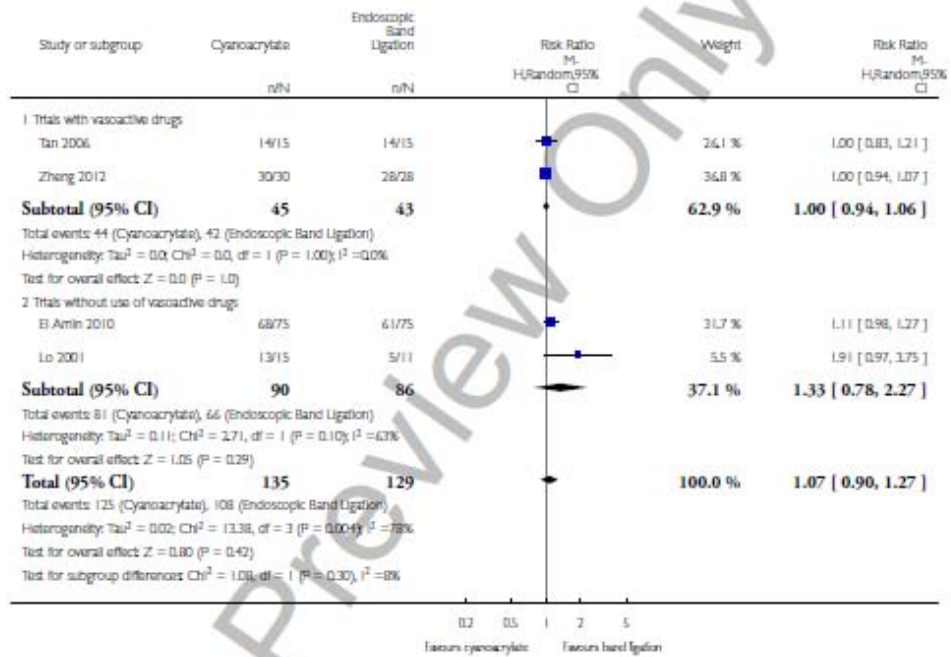


Analysis 3.20. Comparison 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation, Outcome 20 Control of bleeding stratified by use of vasoactive drugs.

Review: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension

Comparison: 3 Cyanoacrylate versus Endoscopic Band Ligation

Outcome: 20 Control of bleeding stratified by use of vasoactive drugs



APPENDICES

Appendix I. Search strategies

Database	Time Span	Search strategy
Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Controlled Trials Register	February 2013.	(cyanoacrylat* OR cyanoacrilat*) AND (varic* AND (bleed* OR hemorrhage*))
Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL) (Wiley)	Issue 1 of 12, 2013.	#1 MeSH descriptor Cyanoacrylatesexplode all trees #2 cyanoacr*lat* #3 (#1 OR #2) #4 MeSH descriptor Esophageal and Gastric Varices explode all trees #5 (varic* AND (bleed* OR hemorrhage*)) #6 (#4 OR #5) #7 (#3 AND #6)
MEDLINE (OvidSP)	1946 to February 2013.	1. exp Cyanoacrylates/ 2. cyanoacr*lat*.mp. [mp-protocol supplementary concept, rare disease supplementary concept, title, original title, abstract, name of substance word, subject heading word, unique identifier] 3. 1 or 2 4. exp *Esophageal and Gastric Varices*/ 5. (varic* and (bleed* or hemorrhage*)).mp. [mp-protocol supplementary concept, rare disease supplementary concept, title, original title, abstract, name of substance word, subject heading word, unique identifier] 6. 4 or 5 7. 3 and 6 8. (random* or blind* or placebo* or meta-analysis).mp. [mp-protocol supplementary concept, rare disease supplementary concept, title, original title, abstract, name of substance word, subject heading word, unique identifier] 9. 7 and 8
EMBASE (OvidSP)	1974 to February 2013.	1. exp cyanoacrylate/ 2. cyanoacr*lat*.mp. [mp-title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword] 3. 1 or 2 4. exp stomach varices/ 5. (varic* and (bleed* or hemorrhage*)).mp. [mp-title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword] 6. 4 or 5 7. 3 and 6

Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension (Review)
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(Continued)

		8. (random* or blind* or placebo* or meta-analysis).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manu- facturer, device trade name, keyword] 9. 7 and 8
Science Citation Index Expanded (apps.webofknowledge.com.ep.fjernadgang.l	1900 to February 2013.	# 5 #4 AND #3 # 4 TS=(random* or blind* or placebo* or meta-analysis) # 3 #2 AND #1 # 2 TS=(varic* AND (bleed* OR hemorrhage*)) # 1 TS=cyanoacr*lat*

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AUTHORS

Review

Eddy Rios - Conception of the idea, design of the review, analysis and interpretation of results, writing the manuscript.

Pamela Serón - Design of the review, analysis and interpretation of results.

Javier P Gisbert - Design of the review, analysis and interpretation of results.

Xavier Bonfill - Design of the review, analysis, and interpretation of results.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None known

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Internal sources

- La Frontera University, Department of Internal Medicine, Temuco, Chile.
Time protection for preparation of the review. Helping for some fees of the PhD course

External sources

- There were not external support, Other.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROTOCOL AND REVIEW

There were heterogeneous definitions across trials regarding time-to-measure outcomes. We originally planned to analyse time end points using the Baveno criteria (de Franchis 2010) , but that was not possible because not all the needed data was available.

Differences for primary outcomes

1. All-cause mortality at maximum follow-up. Only two trials included in this review used all-cause mortality and therefore this outcome was not possible to assess. But all of the included trials included bleeding-related mortality which is the most important outcome to assess the efficacy of a treatment for arresting bleeding, and therefore that outcome was included.
2. Bleeding-related mortality: number of patients who died from uncontrolled variceal bleeding.
3. Failure of intervention: The five-day time end-point was not possible to assess. The rationale for this end point outcome was the proposed standardization by the Baveno consensus (de Franchis 2010) and proposed by other Cochrane systematic reviews (D'Amico 2010; Guo 2008), but the majority of trials reported at one, three or 7 days.
4. Re-bleeding: The forty-two day time end-point was not always possible to assess. The rationale for this end point outcome was the proposed standardization by the Baveno consensus (de Franchis 2010) and proposed by other Cochrane systematic reviews (D'Amico 2010; Guo 2008). None of the included trials in this review used this definition. Four trials used 24 hours for definition of re-bleeding, one 72 hours and one use a variable time concept (bleeding before next endoscopy session).
5. Adverse events: Adverse events analysis had to be adjusted depending on the data found in each trial. For each comparison the reported adverse effects are measured.

Secondary outcomes

6. One-day treatment failure: This outcome has the same definition of control of bleeding, and therefore the name was changed.
7. Number of transfusions: Not all the trials included this outcome, and was not possible to calculate.
8. Quality of life. None of the trials included this outcome.
9. TIPS or surgery: number of patients that underwent TIPS or surgery. Only one trial included this outcome.

Reported outcomes not included in the protocol

One outcome not directly considered in the protocol was the arresting of active bleeding, which was found in all the studies and considered very important as a measurement of efficacy. We therefore we informed this outcome.

Differences in methods

Trial sequential analysis was done for re-bleeding and mortality in the cyanoacrylate and band ligation comparison. For the other outcomes and comparison the data was scarce.

Publication bias assessment was not carried out because there were not enough trials to conduct this analysis.

ARTICULO 3.-

Evaluation of the quality of clinical practice guidelines for the management of esophageal or gastric variceal bleeding.

E. Ríos; P. Serón ; F. Lanas ; X. Bonfill ; Quigley MM E; P. Alonso-Coello. European Journal of Gastroenterology & Hepatology 2014,Vol 25 N° 4: 422-431

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Evaluation of the quality of clinical practice guidelines for the management of esophageal or gastric variceal bleeding

Eddy Ríos^a, Pamela Serón^a, Fernando Lanás^a, Xavier Bonfill^b,
Eamonn M.M. Quigley^c and Pablo Alonso-Coello^b

Setting Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) should provide healthcare practitioners with the best possible evidence. Their quality, however, is often suboptimal. An evaluation of CPGs for the treatment of esophageal or gastric variceal bleeding (VB) has not been performed to date.

Aim The aim of this study was to identify and evaluate the quality of CPGs for esophageal or gastric VB.

Methods We performed a systematic search of the scientific literature published up to July 2012 to identify and select CPGs related to the management of esophageal or gastric VB. Three independent reviewers assessed the eligible guidelines using the Appraisal of Guidelines, Research, and Evaluation II (AGREE II) instrument. Standardized scores were calculated for the six domains of each instrument, and the overall agreement among reviewers was assessed on the basis of the intraclass correlation coefficient.

Results Of a total of 23 CPGs identified, 10 were selected. Intraobserver agreement was good (overall intraclass correlation coefficient of 0.956, 95% confidence interval 0.958–0.973). The overall quality of the guidelines varied from low to moderate. Stratified by domains, the quality was good to acceptable in three domains: 'scope and purpose' (78.1%, median 82.3, range 46–100); 'clarity and presentation' (87.2%, median 91.6, range 67–98); and 'editorial independence' (64.1%, median 61.1, range 22–94), but with deficiencies in another three:

'rigor of development' (47.6%, range 28–94), 'stakeholder involvement' (47.5%, median 37, range 18–98) and 'applicability' (25.9% median 13.2, range 1–83). In the overall evaluation, two guidelines were considered 'highly recommended', three, 'recommended with modifications', and five, 'not recommended'. There was a significant improvement in quality over time.

Conclusion The overall quality of CPGs for the management of esophageal or gastric VB has improved over time. Although the overall quality was not optimal, two guidelines achieved an excellent rating. A summary of recommendations is provided. *Eur J Gastroenterol Hepatol* 26:422–431 © 2014 Wolters Kluwer Health | Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

European Journal of Gastroenterology & Hepatology 2014, 26:422–431

Keywords: Appraisal of Guidelines, Research, and Evaluation instrument, clinical practice guidelines, esophageal variceal bleeding, esophagogastric variceal bleeding, gastric variceal bleeding, upper digestive bleeding, variceal bleeding

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Study highlights

- (1) What is current knowledge:
 - (a) Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) are an integral component of treatment of a disease.
 - (b) An evaluation of CPGs for the treatment of esophageal or gastric variceal bleeding (VB) has not been performed to date.
- (2) What is new here:
 - (a) The overall quality of CPGs for VB is low to moderate.
 - (b) The quality of CPGs has improved over time.
 - (c) There are two guidelines of excellent quality.
 - (d) A summary of recommendations is provided.

Supplemental digital content is available for this article. Direct URL citations appear in the printed text and are provided in the HTML and PDF versions of this article on the journal's website (www.eurjgh.com).

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Endoscopic methods [6–8], vasoactive drugs [9–11], radiological interventions [12], and surgical procedures [13,14] improve the prognosis of acute bleeding episodes, with a decrease in immediate mortality due to bleeding. However, the short-term and medium-term effectiveness of these interventions is still being evaluated [15,16].

An attempt to standardize these potential treatments under different clinical scenarios has been made through the development of CPGs in this field. CPGs are defined by the Institute of Medicine as a series of norms developed systematically to assist doctors and patients in making the most appropriate health decisions under specific clinical circumstances, so as to decrease treatment variability [17]. It is expected that these guidelines are based on the best evidence available to facilitate consistent and effective treatment [18].

There are several CPGs available for VB, and it is very often the case that each health center tries to develop its own CPG adapted to its particular circumstance. The resultant development of a large number of guidelines could lead to variability in quality, as the guidelines are often adapted from other guidelines without being based on a solid foundation of evidence. Studies evaluating guidelines for other specialties have shown that their quality is highly variable and that only rarely was a guideline considered optimal [19,20,21].

When we conducted the present study, no study on CPGs was available with regard to the management of VB.

Methods

Identification of guidelines

The search for CPGs was conducted in MEDLINE through PubMed using the terms: 'variceal bleeding', 'variceal hemorrhage', 'esophageal varices', 'gastric varices', 'esophago-gastric variceal bleeding', 'upper digestive variceal bleeding', with the filters clinical practice guidelines, consensus development conference and guideline. The following clinical guideline websites were consulted: Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network, National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, National Guideline Clearinghouse, New Zealand Guidelines Group, Canadian Medical Association Infobase, Guideline Advisory Committee, eGuidelines and Tip database, and the American Association of the Study of Liver Diseases. We also searched for gray literature in Google.

For the search in MEDLINE, we used the following Mesh terms: ('variceal' [All Fields] AND ('hemorrhage' [MeSH Terms] OR 'hemorrhage' [All Fields] OR 'bleeding' [All Fields])) AND Practice Guideline [ptyp], as a filter, with no time limits, and considering documents in English or Spanish. For each article identified, we studied the Related Articles option.

Selection of guidelines

Inclusion criteria

- (1) A systematic literature search that evaluated the quality of evidence and graded the strength of the recommendations.
- (2) The topic of interest should be the treatment of esophageal and gastric VB, with or without primary or secondary prevention, or with this cause considered within the analysis of gastrointestinal bleeding in general (in those cases only the variceal component was analyzed).
- (3) The most up-to-date version, when several versions of a document were available.

Exclusion criteria

- (1) Declaration of recommendations based exclusively on consensus, systematic reviews, and editorials.

Evaluation of clinical practice guidelines

The CPGs selected were assessed using the instrument AGREE II. This is currently the only validated and reliable instrument that enables a quantitative comparison of CPGs [22,23], and is designed to help users and authors of clinical guidelines to evaluate their methodological quality. It contains 23 items grouped into six areas or domains: (i) scope and purpose, (ii) stakeholder participation, (iii) rigor of development, (iv) clarity of presentation, (v) applicability, and (vi) editorial independence (Table 1). Each item is assessed on a seven-point Likert scale that varies between 'strongly disagree' (1 point) to 'strongly agree' (7 points). The overall evaluation of the guideline is ultimately expressed as: 'highly recommended', 'recommended with modifications', and 'not recommended', according to the partial item assessment and global judgment by evaluators.

The selected guidelines were evaluated by three reviewers – a gastroenterologist and two experts in research methodology (E.R., P.S., and F.L.) – independently and blinded to each other, using the AGREE II instrument. Disagreements were settled by discussion and consensus, maintaining the individual evaluations. For disagreements for which no consensus could be reached, a fourth reviewer (X.B.) was consulted.

CPGs were analyzed taking into account the country of origin, type of organization that developed them, year of publication, and specific treatment recommendations for acute bleeding, recurrence of bleeding, and failure of first-line treatment, as well as their cause (either esophageal or gastric varices). The recommendations for prevention of primary and secondary bleeding for each type of varice, in the case in which primary and secondary bleeding were considered, were also analyzed.

Table 1 AGREE II instrument

Scope and purpose (Items 1–3)	
1.	The overall objective(s) of the guideline is (are) specifically described
2.	The clinical question(s) covered by the guideline is (are) specifically described
3.	The patients to whom the guideline is meant to apply are specifically described
Stakeholder involvement (Items 4–7)	
4.	The guideline development group includes individuals from all the relevant professional groups
5.	Patient views and preferences have been sought
6.	The target users of the guideline are clearly defined
7.	The guideline has been piloted among target users
Rigor of development (Items 8–14)	
8.	Systematic methods were used to search for evidence
9.	The criteria for selecting the evidence are clearly described
10.	The methods used for formulating the recommendations are clearly described
11.	The health benefits, side effects, and risks have been considered in formulating the recommendations
12.	There is an explicit link between the recommendations and the supporting evidence
13.	The guideline has been externally reviewed by experts before its publication
14.	A procedure for updating the guideline is provided
Clarity and presentation (Items 15–18)	
15.	The recommendations are specific and unambiguous
16.	The different options for management of the condition are clearly presented
17.	Key recommendations are easily identifiable
18.	The guideline is supported by tools for application
Applicability (Items 19–21)	
19.	The potential organizational barriers in applying the recommendations have been discussed
20.	The potential cost implications of applying the recommendations have been considered
21.	The guideline presents key review criteria for monitoring and/or audit purposes
Editorial independence (Items 22–23)	
22.	The guideline is editorially independent from the funding body
23.	Conflicts of interest of guideline development members have been recorded

AGREE, Appraisal of Guidelines, Research, and Evaluation.

Treatment recommendations

The recommendations were compiled on a datasheet developed to synthesize treatment recommendations, as well as the levels of evidence for each recommendation, by one of the reviewers (E.R.). This information was checked by the other authors. The systems used were reviewed to determine the level of evidence and the grades of recommendation.

The main recommendations were summarized using the following items: treatment options for the acute episode of bleeding due to rupture of varices; treatment options in the event of failure of endoscopic treatment; primary and secondary prevention of bleeding, all treated separately for gastric varices and esophageal varices.

Statistical analyses

To establish the quality of each CPG, the standardized scores for each domain were calculated, expressed as percentages. The standardized quality score for each domain was obtained by adding all the scores of the individual items, using the following formula:

$$\frac{(\text{Score obtained} - \text{minimum score possible})}{(\text{Maximum score possible} - \text{minimum score possible})} \times 100$$

The resulting scores vary between 0 and 100% [23].

Once the scores were established for each guideline, they were compared using descriptive statistics (average, mean, and range) for each guideline and each domain, identifying those that scored above or below 70%. The intraclass correlation coefficient was calculated, with 95% confidence intervals, as a measure of interobserver reliability for each guideline and for the entire body of guidelines. According to the scale proposed by Landis and Koch, a degree of agreement between 0.01 and 0.20 is slight, from 0.21 to 0.40 is fair, from 0.41 to 0.60 is moderate, from 0.61 to 0.80 is substantial, and from 0.81 to 1.00 is very good. The data were analyzed using SPSS 2.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, Illinois, USA).

Results

Literature search

Initially 4612 general articles on the subject were identified (PubMed), of which 14 were CPGs. Adding together all those found on websites for guideline developers and of scientific societies, plus those obtained on the free search, a total of 23 documents were obtained, the complete text of which was examined [9,24–45] (Appendix 1 http://www.ciges.ollerio.sjfiles/APPENDIX_1_Evaluated_guidelines.docx). Of these, 10 were identified as CPGs fulfilling the inclusion criteria and were subjected to complete evaluation according to AGREE II (Fig. 1).

In two CPGs, VB was included as a cause of gastro-intestinal bleeding in general [24,25], and eight CPGs dealt exclusively with esophagogastric VB [26–34]. Three were developed in the USA [29,32,33], three in the UK [24,25,34], and the rest in India, China, Korea, Mexico, and Malaysia. The only international organization that has developed a clinical guideline that attempts to be universal is the World Gastroenterology Organization [31]. All the guidelines analyzed were developed for adults. No clinical guidelines developed exclusively for children were found (Table 2).

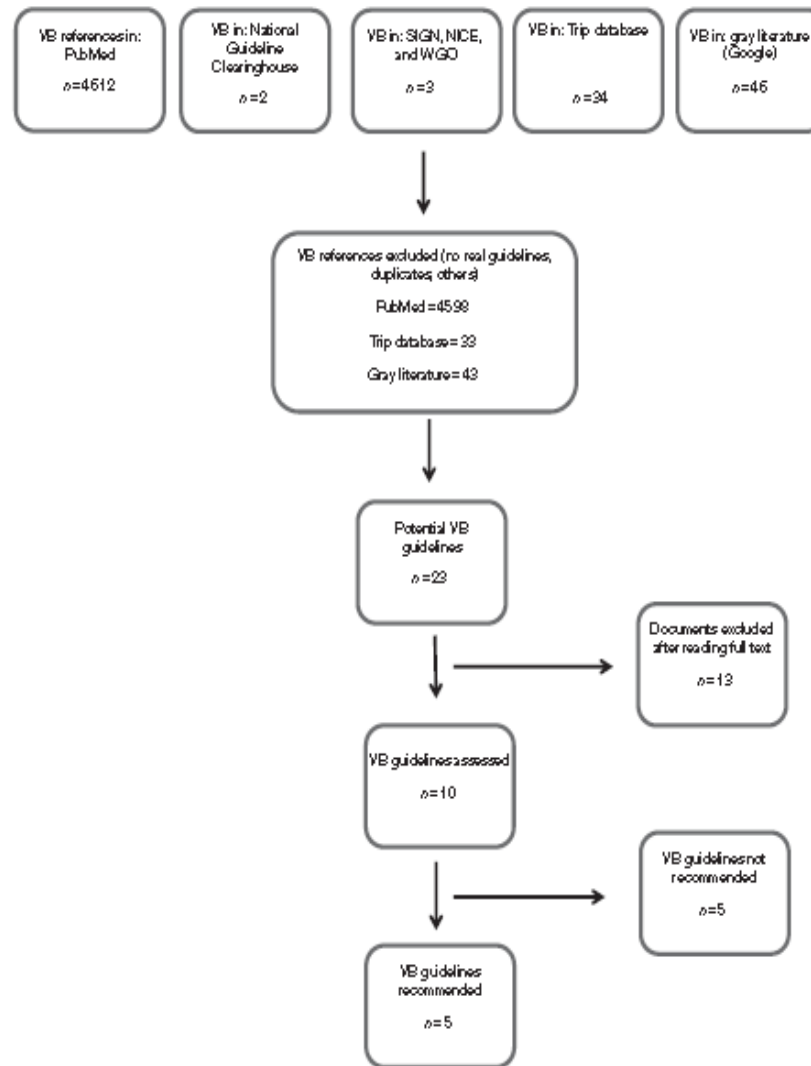
Clinical practice guideline assessment

We obtained an overall intraclass correlation coefficient value of agreement between appraisers of 0.956 (95% confidence interval 0.958–0.973, $P < 0.00$), indicating high internal consistency. The results for each CPG per domain and per guideline are shown in Table 3. The mean results of each domain for the CPGs evaluated are shown in Fig. 2.

Scope and purpose (domain 1)

This domain is related to the general goal of the guideline and considers the health problem and the specific population addressed. The average score was 78.1 (median 82.3, range 46–100). Of the CPGs, 70% scored over 70%.

Fig. 1



Flow chart. Search of literature for variceal bleeding guidelines. NICE, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence; SIGN, Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network; VB, variceal bleeding; WGO, World Gastroenterology Organization.

Stakeholder involvement (domain 2)

This domain is related to the working group that developed the guideline, taking appropriate stakeholders and the opinion of potential users into account. The average score was 47.5 (median 37, range 18–98). Of the CPGs, 20% scored over 70%.

Rigor of development (domain 3)

This domain considers the process used to obtain and summarize the evidence, as well as the methodology used to formulate the recommendations and their updates.

The average score was 52.5 (median 47.6, range 28–94). Of the CPGs, 20% scored over 70%.

Clarity of presentation (domain 4)

This domain evaluates the wording, structure, and format of the guideline. The average score was 87.2 (median 91.6, range 67–98). Of the CPGs, 90% scored over 70%.

Applicability (domain 5)

This domain considers the barriers to and facilitators of the implementation of a guideline, including aspects

Table 2 Characteristics of clinical practice guidelines on variceal bleeding

Guideline	Title/reference number	Country	Organisation	Year
1	Acute upper gastrointestinal bleeding management [24]	United Kingdom	National Clinical Guideline Centre (NICE) National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NHS)	2012
2	Management of acute upper and lower gastrointestinal bleeding: a national clinical guideline [25]	Scotland	Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)	2008
3	Diagnóstico y tratamiento de varices esofágicas. Evidencias y recomendaciones [26]	México	Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS)	2008
4	Management of acute variceal bleeding [27]	Malaysia	Ministry of Health Malaysia, Malaysian Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia	2007
5	Prevention and Management of Gastroesophageal Varices and Variceal Hemorrhage in Cirrhosis [28, 29]	USA	American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases American College of Gastroenterology (AASLD)	2007
6	Diagnosis and management of acute variceal bleeding [30]	India	Asian Pacific Association for Study of Liver recommendations (APASL)	2010
7	WGO Practice Guidelines. Esophageal varices I [31]	International	World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO)	2008
8	ASGE Guideline: the role of endoscopy in the management of variceal hemorrhage [32]	USA	American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE)	2002 2005 (update)
9	The Role of Transjugular Intrahepatic Portosystemic Shunt Creation in the Management of Portal Hypertension [33]	USA	American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD)	2005
10	UK guidelines on the management of variceal haemorrhage in cirrhotic patients [34]	United Kingdom	British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG)	2000

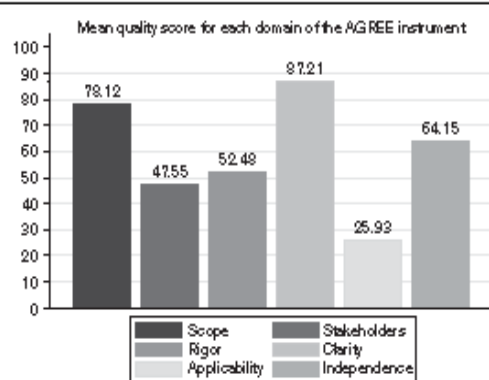
Highly recommended
Recommended with modifications
Not recommended

Table 3 Mean standardized score per domain and overall assessment results for each evaluated CPG

Guideline	Mean standardized score (%)						Mean (SD) of domains for each guideline	Overall recommendation
	Scope and purpose	Stakeholder involvement	Rigor of development	Clarity and presentation	Applicability	Editorial independence		
1	100	90.7	93.7	98.1	83.3	94.4	93.4 (5.9)	Strongly recommended
2	98.1	98.1	82.6	90.7	69.4	63.9	83.8 (14.6)	Strongly recommended
3	90.7	61.1	66.6	92.6	16.7	88.9	69.4 (29)	Recommended with modifications
4	96.3	59.2	52.8	94.4	9.7	91.7	67.3 (33.9)	Recommended with modifications
5	64.8	40.7	55.5	94.4	16.7	44.4	52.7 (26.1)	Recommended with modifications
6	48.1	18.5	33.3	74.1	6.9	80.5	43.6 (29.6)	Not recommended
7	46.3	33.3	33.3	66.7	40.3	50.0	44.9 (12.6)	Not recommended
8	75.9	25.9	42.4	79.6	1.0	22.2	41.2 (31.3)	Not recommended
9	72.2	27.7	36.1	85.2	5.6	58.9	47.5 (29.7)	Not recommended
10	88.8	20.3	28.5	96.3	9.7	47.2	48.5 (36.4)	Not recommended
Mean (SD) for each domain	78.1 (20.0)	47.5 (28.7)	52.5 (22.3)	82.2 (10.5)	25.9 (28.8)	64.1 (22.2)		

CPG, clinical practice guideline.

Fig. 2



Mean quality score for domains of the recommended CPGs. AGREE, Appraisal of Guidelines, Research, and Evaluation; CPGs, clinical practice guidelines.

related to resources and the likelihood of adherence to the recommendations. The average score was 25.9 (median 13.2, range 1–83). Of the CPGs, 10% scored over 70%.

Editorial independence (domain 6)

This domain evaluates whether the recommendations could be influenced by sources of funding. The average score in this domain was 64.1 (median 61.1, range 22–94). Of the CPGs, 40% scored over 70%.

Overall assessment

After weighting the scores of all guidelines, reviewers classified them as follows: two as 'highly recommended' (20%), three as 'recommended with modifications' (30%), and five as 'not recommended' (50%). Of the 10 fully assessed CPGs, nine were published in 2005 or later (Table 2). The best evaluated guidelines were formulated between 2008 and 2012.

Summary of treatment recommendations

The five recommended guidelines were analyzed. Four different systems were used to determine the quality of evidence and the strength of recommendation (Appendix 2, http://www.cjce.elsevier.com/files/APPENDIX_2_Levels_and_evidence_grades.docx). A summary of the items used and their grades of recommendations are provided in Tables 4 and 5.

For the acute episode of esophageal VB, four guidelines assigned an A grade recommendation to the use of vasoactive drugs, endoscopic ligation, and antibiotic prophylactic treatment [25–28], whereas one assigned an A grade to the use of vasoactive drugs and a B grade to endoscopic ligation and the prophylactic use of antibiotics [24]. One guideline also recommended endo-

scopic sclerotherapy with an A grade [28]. In the case of gastric VB, two guidelines [24,27] gave an A grade recommendation for treatment with cyanoacrylate, whereas another three [25,26,28] gave this a B grade.

With regard to options in the event of failure of endoscopic treatment for esophageal VB, all the guidelines recommended the use of a transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt (TIPS) as the primary option and balloon tamponade as the second option, but with variations in the grade of recommendation (from A to C). In the case of gastric varices, all the guidelines recommended the use of TIPS as the first option, balloon tamponade as the second option, and surgery with a lower and variable grade of evidence (from A to C).

Three guidelines dealt with the primary prevention of esophageal VB [25,26,28], recommending the use of a nonselective β blocker (NSBB) for medium or large varices with a grade of A; two recommended treatment with NSBB for small varices as well (grades B and C). Only two recommended the use of ligation for large varices at risk for bleeding, with an A grade recommendation [26,28]. With respect to gastric varices, none of the guidelines gave a primary prevention recommendation.

Four guidelines dealt with the secondary prevention of esophageal VB, recommending the use of endoscopic ligation plus NSBB (or both considered separately), all four grading this approach with an A grade [25–28]. Two recommended considering TIPS with an A grade [25,28], and one with a B grade [27]. For gastric varices, only three guidelines gave recommendations that ranged from the use of TIPS [25,27,28], with grades of A and B, obliteration with cyanoacrylate [27], with a grade of B, to the use of NSBB [27], with a grade of B.

Discussion

This evaluation of the quality of clinical guidelines for the treatment of gastric and esophageal VB shows that the quality of the published guidelines has been improving considerably over recent years. Within the analysis of the domains, of the 10 guidelines selected, the best ratings were for clarity (9/10 > 70%), scope and purpose (7/10 guidelines > 70%), and independence (5/10 > 70%). The worst ratings were for applicability (1/10 > 70%), stakeholders (2/10 > 70%), and rigor (2/10 > 70%).

The domain of rigor is considered the most important, as this refers to the methodological aspects that deal with how the recommendations are developed. It is in this item that the quality of CPGs presented the greatest differences, as only two obtained high scores, and these were the two ultimately judged to be worthy of being highly recommended [24,25]. The remaining guidelines either did not describe their literature search strategies or did not clearly describe their selection methods, in addition to being imprecise with regard to the accurate

Table 5 Summary of recommendations for acute gastric variceal bleeding, rebleeding, and primary and secondary prevention with grades of recommendation

Guideline	Acute bleeding	Endoscopy failure	Primary prevention	Secondary prevention
SIGN 2008	Endoscopy obliteration with cyanoacrylate B ^a	TIPS as 1 st choice C ^a Consider balloon tamponade D ^a	No data	Consider TIPS A ^a
NICE 2012	Endoscopy obliteration with cyanoacrylate 1 ^b	TIPS if cyanoacrylate fails 1 ^b	No data	No data
USA 2007	Endoscopy obliteration with cyanoacrylate B ^c Consider endoscopy band ligation B ^c	TIPS if cyanoacrylate fails B ^c	No data	Consider TIPS B ^c
Malaysian 2007	Type 1 Treat as esophageal varices B ^d Type 2 Endoscopy obliteration with cyanoacrylate A ^d	Consider TIPS B ^d Consider surgical shunt B ^d Consider balloon tamponade C ^d	No data	NSBB B ^d Endoscopy obliteration with cyanoacrylate B ^d Consider TIPS B ^d
Mexican 2008	Type 1 Treat as esophageal varices B ^e Type 2 Endoscopy obliteration with cyanoacrylate B ^e Consider endoscopic band ligation if cyanoacrylate not available B ^e	Consider TIPS B ^e Consider balloon tamponade B ^e	No data	No data

NSBB, nonselective β -blocker; SIGN, Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network; TIPS, transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt

^aSIGN system.

^bGrade system: 1, high-quality studies; 2, moderate-quality studies; 3, low-quality studies; 4, very low-quality studies; 5, no evidence available (numerated scale adapted for Table).

^cAdapted from American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association.

^dAdapted from US/Canadian Preventive Services Task Force.

^eTexas University System.

VB guidelines obtained a higher score [19]. The results are also similar to those from a recent review of guidelines included in the National Guideline Clearinghouse [20].

Analysis of the actual content between documents showed little variability, with similar recommendations being advanced despite variations in the score assigned. However, the grading of these recommendations was inconsistent, in part, because the grading systems used (ABCD) in the evaluated guidelines were not uniform, with four different systems (as shown in Appendix 2) used to grade evidence. As there is no standardized and universal system, we prefer to show the summary of recommendations along with the system used. Inconsistencies could also be due to other factors such as a limited number of primary articles and differences in the critical appraisal process. The latter was relevant and is consistent with the poor performance in the 'rigor of development' domain, thereby reflecting a lack of methodological expertise, which is, in turn, often related to a lack of adequate resources. The use of GRADE in only one guideline [24] could be related to the latter

finding, as this requires advanced knowledge to be implemented.

In light of the characteristics of VB, it is clearly not easy to design randomized and blinded clinical trials in an emergency setting. It is for this reason that the medical community has tackled this problem primarily through consensus meetings, in which the top experts carry a great deal of weight. Analysis of the literature shows that evidence-based guidelines are relatively recent (only one in 2000 and the others after 2005). Before (and after) those dates, the Baveno consensus workshops took place [9], named on the basis of the location of the meeting. The most cited guideline ('recommended with modifications' in our study) is based largely on these consensus workshops [28], incorporating relatively limited evidentiary analysis. To assess whether there were changes in guideline quality over time, we did not limit the search of guidelines by time. The two best evidence-based guidelines are the most recent (2008 and 2012, respectively) [24,25]. Both were developed in the UK and also had the highest score in the domain 'rigor'.

The highest scoring guideline in this evaluation is only a few months old [24].

Our evaluation has some limitations. The AGREE instrument has the characteristic of not being able to determine the impact of the recommendations on the expected patient outcomes, and when selecting the guidelines that specified that they were evidence-based, one could gain an impression of high quality. This is not necessarily true; the scores obtained in the domain of 'rigor of development' are mediocre, as this domain is the one that deals with the quality of evidence; hence, evidence needs to be evaluated and not only stated.

Our study also has some strengths. The search was systematic and exhaustive, including searching for references in the related articles' resources and going through the references of each included CPG. However, we did not include CPGs in languages other than English and Spanish. In the case of the language criteria, it is likely that CPGs omitted, from less developed countries, were of lower quality than the ones included. To this extent, our evaluation should overestimate the quality of VB guidelines. Finally, we had a high degree of agreement among the appraisers.

Conclusion

Our review of guidelines for the treatment of VB shows an overall low to moderate quality, with some guidelines of high quality formulated by multidisciplinary teams.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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DISCUSSION

6. DISCUSION

Este trabajo de tesis ha integrado tres investigaciones con objetivos independientes pero unidos por aspectos clínicos y metodológicos comunes.

El aspecto clínico bajo estudio fue el tratamiento endoscópico de la hemorragia producida por la ruptura de várices, tanto del esófago como del estómago en pacientes con hipertensión portal de variados orígenes. Este tema se consideró relevante dado de que la hemorragia variceal es una de las emergencias más dramáticas de la gastroenterología, presenta aún una mortalidad importante, es de prevalencia universal y a pesar de que existen variados tratamientos, la evidencia disponible para las distintas intervenciones, y en especial para las endoscópicas, es aún insuficiente o controversial.

En este contexto, la pregunta de investigación: ¿Cuál es la eficacia de los tratamientos endoscópicos usando ligaduras elásticas comparado con la esclerosis endoscópica de las várices esofágicas y por inyección de cianoacrilato comparado con otros métodos endoscópicos en las várices gástricas?, fue respondida a través de la consecución de los siguientes objetivos en cada trabajo: (1) determinar la efectividad de la ligadura endoscópica comparado la esclerosis endoscópica en el sangrado agudo de várices esofágicas en el Hospital Hernán Henríquez de Temuco, Chile en pacientes con hipertensión portal, mediante un diseño de estudio de cohorte. (2) determinar la efectividad de la escleroterapia endoscópica con cianoacrilato comparada con otros procedimientos endoscópicos para el sangrado agudo de várices gástricas en pacientes con hipertensión portal, mediante la revisión sistemática de la literatura universal y la realización de un metaanálisis de los ensayos clínicos controlados y aleatorizados realizados sobre el tema y (3) evaluar de forma sistemática la calidad de las guías de práctica clínica disponibles para tratamiento de la hemorragia digestiva alta por ruptura de várices de esófago y de estómago.

En el primer trabajo se realizó una comparación de los dos tratamientos considerados más efectivos para las várices esofágicas en los pacientes de una región de Chile en un periodo de tiempo considerable. En el segundo trabajo se evaluaron la efectividad de los tratamientos considerados más efectivos para las várices gástricas en la literatura universal y en el tercer trabajo se evaluaron las recomendaciones para ambos tipos de várices.

El aspecto metodológico estuvo basado en la utilización de diseños apropiados para responder a cada pregunta y que estuvieran expuestos al menor riesgo de sesgos posibles para disponer de evidencia de alto nivel, dentro de las posibilidades prácticas. Para el primer trabajo se realizó un estudio de campo de cohortes comparativas, mientras que para los otros estudios se realizaron revisiones críticas de la literatura. Para el segundo trabajo se escogió la revisión sistemática por su

capacidad de resumir la evidencia universal disponible y explicitar sus conclusiones. En el tercer trabajo, se optó por analizar críticamente las guías de práctica clínica que tratan del tema, ya que estos constituyen documentos que se constituyen en un conjunto de recomendaciones para un problema de salud dado, y que deberían estar basados en la mejor evidencia disponible.

Los tres trabajos de investigación que configuran este trabajo de tesis, aparte de generar las conclusiones específicas derivadas de cada uno, han contribuido a generar conocimiento directamente aplicable, a identificar brechas de futuras investigaciones y a reconocer aquellas existentes entre la evidencia disponible y el proceso de toma de decisiones.

A continuación, se profundizará en la interpretación de los hallazgos de cada estudio, sus potenciales relaciones conceptuales entre ellos, el contraste con otras investigaciones, así como sus fortalezas, limitaciones, aprendizajes logrados y posibles líneas de investigación futuras, finalmente se realizará una discusión general integrando los resultados de los trabajos con los conocimientos existentes, y mostrando las brechas que pretenden llenar y las implicaciones que estos tienen para investigaciones futuras.

6.1 Discusión específica derivada de las publicaciones

Discusión de los resultados del trabajo de campo (cohortes comparativas) para valorar la ligadura endoscópica versus la esclerosis endoscópica con compuestos de alcohol en el tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices esofágicas.

El mejor diseño de estudio para responder la pregunta de la eficacia de la ligadura versus la esclerosis debería ser un ensayo clínico aleatorizado, y de existir suficientes, un meta análisis de ensayos clínicos aleatorizados. En la literatura hay varios ensayos clínicos, que por una serie de motivos (número de pacientes bajo, seguimiento corto), no logran aclarar adecuadamente las aparentes ventajas de la ligadura sobre la esclerosis. En el momento de realizar este trabajo, existía solo un meta análisis (33), no Cochrane, que con un total de 7 artículos mostraba ventajas de la ligadura sobre la esclerosis en control del sangrado, recidiva del sangrado y mortalidad, recomendando la ligadura como el tratamiento de elección, pero también recomendando la realización de más estudios.

El trabajo de campo realizado para este trabajo de tesis no pudo ser un ensayo clínico, por una serie de inconvenientes, siendo el principal que nuestro servicio fue adquiriendo el material para las ligaduras endoscópicas de manera gradual (bajo el supuesto que era un tratamiento experimental) y mucho de este material tuvo que ser reutilizado mediante el montaje manual de las bandas de ligadura en el propio servicio para adaptarse a la demanda existente y creciente. Por este y por motivos

presupuestarios no pudimos contar con todo el material necesario para planificar prospectivamente un ensayo clínico, y aprovechando el registro sistemático de estos pacientes que se iba realizando, más trabajo prospectivo en los nuevos pacientes, pudimos realizar un estudio de cohortes.

Ante esta realidad, se debe tener claro que un estudio de cohortes tiene muchas desventajas, por la ausencia de aleatorización y la posible presencia de sesgos propios del diseño, agravado por el carácter retrospectivo de una de las cohortes constituyentes, y el hecho de que la intervención no puede ser ciega ni enmascarada (este aspecto sería similar en un ensayo clínico, por la dificultad del enmascaramiento de un procedimiento endoscópico). Sin embargo, sin intentar equiparar la calidad de la evidencia obtenida de uno u otro diseño (calidad de la evidencia 1b vs 2b) (87), los resultados de la aleatorización de un ensayo clínico finalmente se miden en la distribución similar de todas las covariables que no sean los resultados de la intervención. En este estudio, las cohortes estudiadas muestran una distribución similar de todas las variables de interés que pudieran haber desbalanceado los resultados (exceptuando el tiempo de seguimiento, del que hablaremos en extenso más adelante). Estas variables se comportan tal y como si hubieran sido aleatorizadas exitosamente. La explicación de este fenómeno es que la población con la patología en estudio es del todo similar dentro del periodo de tiempo total estudiado, y todas las variables son estables, ya que los pacientes son similares. No hubo en todo este tiempo fenómenos que hayan hecho variar la epidemiología de la cirrosis, su gravedad, ni cambios en la derivación de los pacientes de toda la región al hospital) lo que se traduce en que los pacientes de la primera cohorte resultan similares y comparables con los de la segunda cohorte. Por lo tanto, las variables de edad, sexo, etiología de la enfermedad y gravedad de la enfermedad de base, tipo de várices, gravedad de la hemorragia, tiempo del inicio de la emergencia al tratamiento, tratamiento previo y posterior resultan ser iguales entre los pacientes tratados con esclerosis en el primer tiempo del seguimiento o ligaduras endoscópicas en el segundo.

El tiempo de tratamiento merece un comentario aparte. Las dos cohortes fueron cronológicamente sucesivas, respondiendo al desarrollo tecnológico de los equipos y materiales de tratamiento. Eso significó que el tiempo de seguimiento de la primera cohorte (tratada con esclerosis endoscópica) fue mayor en aproximadamente un año a la cohorte tratada con ligadura endoscópica. Esto podría sesgar los resultados del estudio sobre la base que, a mayor tiempo transcurrido, mayor la mortalidad debida a la enfermedad de base, tomando en cuenta que la cirrosis es una enfermedad de curso fatal en alguna de sus múltiples complicaciones. Sin embargo, existen dos hechos que deben tomarse en cuenta para el análisis, siendo el primero la distribución de las causas de la mortalidad en ambos grupos. La cohorte de esclerosis presentó un 65% de sus fallecimientos debidos directa o indirectamente a la hemorragia (es decir directamente relacionados con el sangrado variceal), comparado con un 40% de los

pacientes de la cohorte de ligadura por este mismo motivo. A la inversa, solo el 31% de los pacientes de la cohorte de esclerosis falleció de otras causas (las que requieren de más tiempo de sobrevida libre de hemorragia para desarrollarse), comparado con el 60% de la cohorte de ligadura, que tuvieron el tiempo para presentarlas (ambos resultados estadísticamente significativos). El segundo hecho tiene que ver con la historia natural de la enfermedad. Es esperable que la totalidad de los portadores de cirrosis eventualmente fallezcan a causa de algunas de sus complicaciones, y para poder juzgar adecuadamente el tiempo relativo de desarrollo de cada una de ellas, es necesario fijar algún criterio. El sangrado variceal produce fallecimientos en un tiempo relativamente corto, y podemos postular, de acuerdo a los resultados del análisis de sobrevida, que este tiempo es similar para ambas cohortes, independientemente el tratamiento. Ambos grupos tienen una mortalidad temprana rápida que se estabiliza posteriormente. La diferencia entre ambos grupos está dada por la mayor sobrevida del grupo de ligadura, siendo comparables la forma de las curvas. El tiempo de seguimiento para ambas cohortes incluyó este tiempo, lo que nos permite postular que el mayor tiempo de seguimiento de la cohorte de esclerosis no es el responsable principal del exceso de mortalidad medida.

En cuanto al sesgo introducido por la falta de doble ciego, siendo cohortes diferentes en el tiempo, donde en su momento, no existía la posibilidad de escoger entre uno u otro procedimiento, el posible sesgo, si acaso existente parece pequeño y probablemente no diferencial (97). Diseñar un simple o doble ciego en un ensayo clínico de estos procedimientos es muy complejo de poder realizarse dadas las dificultades de enmascaramiento de los procedimientos, y los trabajos analizados en la revisión sistemática que es parte de este trabajo de tesis así lo demuestran. Para el análisis de los sesgos realizados en los tratamientos endoscópicos que forman parte de la revisión sistemática Cochrane (que constituye otra parte de este trabajo de tesis) se juzgó (al igual que similares revisiones de este tema), que siendo los resultados medidos con datos duros (sangrado, recidiva de sangrado, mortalidad) podían ser independientes del conocimiento tanto de los pacientes como de los operadores (88). De hecho, el análisis ajustado de las dos cohortes comparadas con la pequeña cohorte donde ambos tratamientos (ligadura y esclerosis) se solaparon durante un tiempo corto, muestra que existe un sesgo, pero que este va en dirección de reforzar la efectividad de la ligadura.

En cuanto al tamaño muestral, el número total de pacientes alcanza para mantener el error del azar dentro de los límites comúnmente aceptados, con un cálculo de poder post hoc, que tomó en cuenta para su análisis las diferencias dadas por la literatura con más peso de evidencia (33), y constituye finalmente uno de los trabajos que cuenta con mayor n de todos los estudios publicados (31-34, 35).

De los resultados de las cohortes estudiadas, se pueden responder varias preguntas. Por un lado se logra obtener un panorama claro y propio en relación a la historia clínica de las várices en pacientes portadores de cirrosis. Este muestra que en nuestro medio, con un total de 597 pacientes hospitalizados por cirrosis hepática del 2000 al 2010, 234 de ellos presentaron várices como complicación, las que tuvieron un seguimiento razonablemente largo y cruce de informaciones, lo que nos permite fijar en 39.2% el porcentaje de pacientes con várices (30% en la literatura) (2). El porcentaje de pacientes portadores de várices que sangran en un momento dado en nuestro medio es del 55%, (30 al 70% referido en la literatura)(4). El porcentaje de recidiva del sangrado llega a ser de 67.7, (30 – 40% en la literatura) (1, 6, 8-11). Todos estos datos no difieren de la literatura universal, pero son números concretos que nos permiten planificar adecuadamente nuestros recursos y tener clara nuestra propia realidad.

Sin embargo, el objetivo principal del estudio fue el comparar la eficacia de las dos opciones endoscópicas. En nuestro lugar de trabajo la ligadura endoscópica tuvo claras ventajas sobre la esclerosis, en los resultados de interés: la recidiva del sangrado y la mortalidad, tanto total como la debida a sangrado. La recidiva del sangrado posterior a la intervención (39 vs 72 %, RR de 0.53, IC 95% 0.39 - 0.73, NNT de 3) a favor de la ligadura, y una mortalidad total menor (20 vs 48%, RR 0.41, IC 95% 0.25 – 0.68, NNT 3.55), ambos estadísticamente significativos. La proporción de la hemorragia como causa de la muerte también es menor entre ambas cohortes (40 vs 65%, $p < 0.05$). Estos resultados son muy similares en sus datos numéricos a los obtenidos en el metanálisis de Laine (33), que hasta el momento de realizar este trabajo es el trabajo de mayor nivel de evidencia publicado.

Es interesante que una tercera cohorte estudiada, conformada por los pacientes en los que se detectaron várices no sangrantes, en los que no se hizo ninguna intervención endoscópica y que por lo tanto representa al espectro menos agresivo de estas, presentara una mortalidad general parecida a la cohorte en la que se practicó la ligadura. Finalmente, una pequeña cohorte donde se realizaron ambos procedimientos, esclerosis con etanolamina en un primer momento (y registrados en la cohorte histórica) y posteriormente ligadura endoscópica en los casos en que volvieron a sangrar luego de un intervalo considerable de tiempo (y registrados en la cohorte prospectiva), muestran resultados globales mejores que la esclerosis sola, e inferiores que la ligadura sola. Esto ha sido previamente descrito en la literatura (34), donde se describe que la ligadura sola es superior a la esclerosis o la esclerosis más ligadura).

Se debe resaltar que los resultados obtenidos parecen depender mayormente de los procedimientos realizados y no de otras variables como la gravedad de la enfermedad de base, edad u otros, ya que todas las características demográficas,

clínicas y de gravedad de la enfermedad se mantuvieron similares y equilibradas entre las cohortes estudiadas, y que, dentro del modelo multivariado, solo la gravedad de la enfermedad de base medida de acuerdo a la clasificación de Puig-Child y las intervenciones de esclerosis y ligadura fueron estadísticamente significativas.

Otros resultados que no fueron medidos en el trabajo, pero que se han ido aclarando en el tiempo transcurrido entre el momento que fueron analizados los datos y el momento de escribir este trabajo de tesis (aproximadamente tres años) son entre otros: la disminución del tiempo de hospitalización que requieren los pacientes tratados con uno u otro método (del tiempo promedio de una semana de hospitalización de los pacientes que se trataban con esclerosis, actualmente se da de alta en buenas condiciones a los pacientes tratados con ligadura en 24 horas) y la curva de aprendizaje con la técnica de la ligadura. Actualmente se utilizan métodos estandarizados, que se ha cumplen por los médicos y el personal de enfermería y auxiliar a cargo de estos paciente, tales como empezar la ligadura sobre el vaso sangrante para tener un campo de visión limpio una vez dominada la hemorragia, seguir un diseño de intervención helicoidal para impedir la aparición de estenosis cicatricial, y tratar de ligar la mayor cantidad de várices posibles en la primera intervención.

En resumen, este trabajo, tomando en cuenta sus debilidades de diseño, creemos que aporta evidencia concreta de nivel 2b, con un grado de recomendación B, para recomendar el uso de la ligadura en várices esofágicas.

Discusión de los resultados de la revisión sistemática para valorar la esclerosis endoscópica de cianoacrilato versus esclerosis endoscópica con compuestos de alcohol y ligadura endoscópica en várices gástricas.

El número de ensayos clínicos controlados encontrados durante el curso de la revisión en el tema de tratamiento de las várices gástricas disponibles en las bases de datos fueron escasos. Esto puede ser debido a la baja prevalencia relativa a tipo de las várices, comparadas con las esofágicas (6, 7). Incluso en los grandes centros, luego de muchos años de seguimiento, se reportan números limitados de casos de sangrado de várices gástricas, por lo general bajo los números requeridos para cálculos de tamaño muestral adecuado. Otras características que dificultan la realización de ensayos pueden ser la disponibilidad de recursos, la experiencia de los profesionales, y una serie de variables dependientes del paciente, como el tipo de enfermedad etiológica de base, el grado de gravedad de esta, la presencia de una o más de las muchas posibles complicaciones de la cirrosis, la existencia de carcinoma hepatocelular, la existencia de trombosis venosa de la porta, el estado general del paciente (que puede ser desde alteraciones hemodinámicas leves hasta shock hipovolémico profundo), etc. Finalmente otras variables dependientes de la misma condición pueden ser el tamaño y el tipo de varices, los tratamientos pre-endoscópicos, el uso de drogas vasoactivas, el

uso de diferentes esquemas de resucitación, de uso de inhibidores de bomba de protones y los diferentes esquemas de transfusiones de derivados sanguíneos. Todas estas posibilidades de combinación de tratamientos en una condición de baja prevalencia hacen que los pocos estudios realizados, muchos con pocos pacientes (lo que aumenta la imprecisión), puedan, además, presentar variaciones importantes aumentando la heterogeneidad entre ellos. Por otro lado, el cegamiento del personal no es posible para las intervenciones endoscópicas, aunque probablemente dada la naturaleza objetiva de los resultados (sangrado, re-sangrado, muerte), esto no se traduzca en una fuente importante de sesgo (88), de todas maneras, de acuerdo a los análisis de calidad de evidencia GRADE, los ensayos sufrieron una rebaja de la calidad de su evidencia por la falta de doble ciego. Al existir pocos estudios y menos de los diez requeridos en el protocolo, no se realizó análisis para investigar la existencia de sesgo de publicación.

En el trabajo de revisión sistemática se identificaron tres comparaciones diferentes que se discutirán por separado: dos dosis diferentes de cianoacrilato; comparación de cianoacrilato con compuestos de alcohol y comparación de cianoacrilato con ligadura endoscópica de várices.

Dos diferentes dosis de cianoacrilato

La revisión realizada sugiere que dosis de 0.5 mL de cianoacrilato en cada inyección endoscópica son tan efectivas como dosis de 1 mL, con menores efectos colaterales. Basados solamente en un ensayo clínico controlado (77) con adecuado control de sesgos, y cantidad razonable de pacientes, se demuestra que ambas dosis se comportaron de manera similar para los resultados de: mortalidad; falla del tratamiento; recidiva del sangrado y control del sangrado activo, existiendo una mayor cantidad de efectos colaterales con la dosis mayor.

Lo fundamental en esta revisión está en la cantidad de cianoacrilato que penetra dentro de la várice en cada inyección. La cantidad total de este pegamento utilizada para un paciente individual en todo el procedimiento depende de varios factores como el tamaño y el número de las varices, el éxito del procedimiento de detener efectivamente el sangrado (una sola inyección por várice en caso de detener el sangrado, comparado con más de una inyección por várice en caso de no detenerla con la primera) y el haber conseguido la obturación total o parcial del paquete varicoso, debiendo además tomarse en cuenta las dificultades técnicas de cada procedimiento y la experiencia del endoscopista. Aunque la cantidad total de cianoacrilato administrado puede variar mucho entre pacientes, en este estudio en particular, la dosis total cuando se usaron cargas mayores de 1 mL por várice inyectada, fue solo 0.5 mL mayor que cuando se utilizaron cargas de 0.5 mL (lo que significa que usaron más inyecciones de la menor dosis) y a su vez, la cantidad total de cianoacrilato inyectado

en este estudio fue menor que en los otros estudios utilizados para las restantes comparaciones, donde se llegaron a utilizar hasta el doble de cantidad total de cianoacrilato en la suma de inyecciones individuales de 0.5 mL (61, 62,70).

El objetivo final de la cantidad total de cianoacrilato es la capacidad de este de obliterar por completo el lumen de la varice, pero teniendo además como efecto colateral temido e indeseado, la probabilidad que algo de este pegamento pueda pasar de la varice a la circulaci3n general causando un embolismo en un 3rgano lejano, lo que razonablemente podra esperarse mas con dosis totales mayores. Esta complicaci3n ocurri3 solo en un caso en este estudio cuando se usaba la dosis menor de 0.5 mL, y ocurri3 raramente en el total de los estudios analizados en las otras comparaciones (70, 78). Las complicaciones que se presentaron con mayor frecuencia en el grupo de la dosis de 1 mL fueron de menor importancia relativa.

No se pudo realizar un metanalisis por ausencia de otros estudios de calidad suficiente, y las conclusiones anteriormente expresadas deben tomarse con la cautela propia de contar con un solo estudio de 91 pacientes en total, ademas de las consideraciones ya expuestas.

Cianoacrilato versus compuestos de alcohol:

Los compuestos basados en alcohol (etanolamina maleato, alcohol absoluto y polidocanol) han sido usado por muchos anos en el tratamiento de las varices esofgicas (12, 23, 116, 120) y en su momento representaron un gran avance en el tratamiento del sangrado (33). Estos compuestos nunca tuvieron mucha utilidad en el uso en las varices gsticas, debido al tamao mayor de 3stas y la necesidad de uso de grandes volmenes (como en el trabajo escogido en esta revisi3n). Su eficacia en ensayos randomizados (62) y no randomizados mostraron menor eficacia en el control del sangrado agudo, as como mayores incidencias de re sangrado (28, 43,61) comparado con otras terapias.

Para esta revisi3n solo se identific3 un ensayo clnico controlado (62), que compara cianoacrilato con alcohol absoluto. Otros dos ensayos clnicos sobre el tema fueron descartados por fallas metodol3gicas. Uno por ser quasi- randomizado, y el otro porque, en comunicaci3n personal con su autor, se identificaron serias falencias en el diseo de la randomizaci3n, un seguimiento muy corto y un sesgo de contaminaci3n demasiado importante (de todas maneras, y como ejercicio te3rico se realizaron cculos de sensibilidad, incluyendo a estos dos estudios, los cuales no demostraron diferencias con ninguno de los resultados obtenidos sin estos. Estas comparaciones realizadas por t3cnicas de metanalisis no se incluyeron en la revisi3n Cochrane).

El estudio evaluado tiene un control de sesgos no claro y solo cuenta con 37 pacientes. Muestra ventajas aunque sin alcanzar significancia estadística a favor del cianoacrilato en cuanto a la mortalidad, falla de la intervención y recidiva del sangrado. Sin embargo, se encontraron ventajas estadísticamente significativas a favor del cianoacrilato en cuanto al control del sangrado y la menor frecuencia de complicaciones.

En el conjunto de la literatura usando varios diseños, el cianoacrilato se muestra superior generalmente sin excepciones a los compuestos de alcohol en todos los resultados medibles, y es posible que la no demostración de esta superioridad del cianoacrilato en el estudio incluido en esta revisión, pueda deberse a falta de poder estadístico. De todas maneras, al tratarse de solo un estudio de calidad dudosa y con muy pocos pacientes, todos sus resultados deben tomarse con mucha cautela.

Cianoacrilato versus ligadura endoscópica:

A pesar de publicaciones optimistas que describían las ventajas del uso de cianoacrilato en el control de la hemorragia variceal gástrica, la prevención de la recidiva del sangrado y la disminución de la mortalidad (37, 49, 51, 58, 74) los ensayos clínicos randomizados incluidos en esta revisión (69,70,71,72) solo reportan ventaja estadísticamente significativa del cianoacrilato en evitar la recidiva del sangrado, mostrando ventajas no estadísticamente significativas en la disminuir la mortalidad relacionada con el sangrado, la falla de la intervención, las complicaciones y el control inmediato del sangrado.

El mejor control de la recidiva del sangrado que logra el cianoacrilato comparado con la ligadura muestra muy poca heterogeneidad (I^2 6%), mejora cuando se analizan separadamente los estudios de acuerdo al riesgo de sesgo, se mantiene cuando se analizan todo tipo de várices, y mantienen su tendencia (aunque sin alcanzar significancia estadística) cuando solo se analizan las várices tipo GOV1. Respecto al uso concomitante de drogas vasoactivas, los resultados del cianoacrilato son mejores en los ensayos donde estas no se usan, y en cuanto al periodo de seguimiento (largo o corto) y la presencia de hepatocarcinoma, estos no parecen influir en los resultados. El número total de pacientes incluidos en la revisión alcanza para sugerir que los resultados probablemente no se deben a error aleatorio, lo que es confirmado por el análisis secuencial de ensayos. Sin embargo, la calidad de la evidencia es baja, lo que obliga a tener cautela con su interpretación.

En cuanto a la mortalidad relacionada con el sangrado, la revisión mostró ventajas del cianoacrilato, aunque estas no fueron significativas, con moderada heterogeneidad. Esta ventaja se incrementó hasta casi alcanzar significancia cuando se analizaron solo los estudio de bajo riesgo de sesgo, y se mantuvo similar cuando se

analizaron por tipo de várices, uso de drogas vasoactivas, presencia o no de hepatocarcinoma y tiempo de seguimiento. En ninguno de los análisis el uso de ligadura fue superior.

En cuanto al control inmediato de la hemorragia y la falla del tratamiento (conceptos semejantes y complementarios), el uso de cianoacrilato fue superior a la ligadura, pero sin alcanzar significancia estadística. Esta tendencia no cambió con los análisis separados para artículos con bajo riesgo de sesgo, tipo de várices, uso de drogas vasoactivas, presencia de hepatocarcinoma y tiempo de seguimiento. En ninguno de los análisis el uso de la ligadura se mostró superior.

Finalmente, en cuanto al conjunto de efectos adversos (leves, moderados y graves), la revisión mostró ligera ventaja de la ligadura, sin alcanzar la significancia estadística y con alta heterogeneidad. En general todas las complicaciones para ambos tratamientos fueron menores. La complicación más temida para el uso de cianoacrilato, el embolismo a órganos distantes, se produjo en un solo caso de todos los artículos revisados, y paradójicamente se observó en el grupo en el que se usó la ligadura.

El conjunto de estos resultados, si bien son menos optimistas en demostrar la efectividad de la inyección de cianoacrilato que los ensayos individuales o la suma de trabajos con otros diseños y la mayoría de las guías clínicas, muestran al menos un resultado favorable y todos los demás con tendencias consistentemente mejores del cianoacrilato que la ligadura. La calidad de la evidencia es baja.

Hay una serie de temas que pueden comprometer los resultados de esta revisión. Si bien los diseños de los ensayos clínicos, los procedimientos para la inyección de cianoacrilato y para el uso de las bandas elásticas, y el grado de gravedad de la enfermedad de base medidos por la clasificación de Child – Pugh son similares y existe coincidencia en la definición de las medidas de los resultados, otras características son diferentes y resultan en grados de heterogeneidad importantes entre los ensayos, tales como el tipo de várices, el uso de drogas vaso activas concomitantes, la presencia de hepatocarcinoma y el tiempo de seguimiento, además de otros menores como diferencias en el uso de transfusiones sanguíneas.

De todas estas diferencias entre ensayos probablemente el tipo de várices sea la característica que puede llevar a la más importante heterogeneidad. Como se mostró en la introducción, es conocido que el tipo GOV1 o varices del cardias están siempre relacionadas con la columna variceal que viene desde el esófago, y que por lo general son una continuación de las mismas, mientras que las várices tipo IGV1, fúndicas o aisladas, están separadas de las columnas variceales esofágicas y muchas veces se encuentran sin que existan várices esofágicas concomitantes. Las várices tipo

IGV1 suelen presentar sangramiento más grave que las GOV1, de acuerdo con la literatura y también sangrar con presiones portales más bajas. En esta revisión, uno de los cuatro ensayos fue realizado exclusivamente con várices GOV1 (69) y por lo tanto podrían tener diferente respuesta al tratamiento. Los otros tres ensayos trataron a todo tipo de várices (70,71,72) con una distribución de los diferentes tipos de várices similar en los tres estudios. Para la recidiva de sangrado los metanálisis realizados mostraron una diferencia estadísticamente significativa a favor del cianoacrilato, que se incrementó cuando se realizaron análisis separados comparando los ensayos clínicos de bajo/alto de sesgo, pero cuando la estratificación fue realizada separando todos los tipos de varices con las de tipo GOV1 solamente (69) los resultados de ambos procedimientos fueron muy similares y ninguno alcanzó significancia estadística. Esto puede sugerir que, para la recidiva del sangrado, el tipo de verice no es importante pero cuando se estudia la mortalidad, esta aumenta cuando el cianoacrilato es usado en verices tipo GOV1, y cuando la ligadura es utilizada en verices tipo IGV1. Estos resultados parecen sugerir que para verices IGV1 el cianoacrilato es superior, y para las verices GOV1 ambos tratamientos pueden ser usados indistintamente.

El uso de drogas vasoactivas tambien podra sesgar los resultados, ya que fueron utilizadas en dos ensayos (71,72) y no usadas en otros dos (69,70). Sin embargo los resultados de los analisis estratificados no son concluyentes o no arrojan diferencias y el bajo numero de participantes disponibles para este tipo de analisis hacen estos resultados difıciles de interpretar.

La magnitud del tiempo de seguimiento tambien puede ser una fuente de sesgos, ya que este intervalo fue diferente en los diferentes ensayos, variando entre 6 a 26 meses. Esto puede sesgar los resultados, particularmente cuando los ensayos cortos (69,70) son comparados con los ensayos largos (71). Dada la naturaleza de la enfermedad, el re-sangrado y la mortalidad podran estar subrepresentados en los ensayos cortos y sobre representados en los largos. A pesar de esta posibilidad de sesgo, los metaanalisis estratificados entre los ensayos cortos y los largos no mostraron diferencias al respecto. Tambien parece importar el hecho que (como se discute en el trabajo de campo), la mortalidad relacionada con el sangrado es mayor en los primeros meses luego de la intervencion y se estabiliza luego.

Finalmente, datos sobre el uso de unidades de sangre usadas para transfusion estuvieron disponibles en dos de los ensayos (70,71), mostrando una tendencia a su menor uso cuando los pacientes se trataron con cianoacrilato.

Es claro que se requieren futuros ensayos para clarificar estos puntos. Estos deberan tener mayor numeros de pacientes enrolados, y con clara estratificacion en la gravedad de la enfermedad de base, tamano y tipo de las verices, presencia de hepatocarcinoma y uso de drogas vasoactivas. Tambien sera importante medir el

tiempo entre el tratamiento de la hemorragia hasta el re-sangrado de manera estandarizada, así como tener tasas de mortalidad debida a sangrado en intervalos de tiempo predefinidos. Dada la baja prevalencia de estas várices, es muy posible que estos objetivos solo se puedan alcanzar con ensayos colaborativos, planificados para intentar disminuir los riesgos de sesgo. Por el momento, a la luz de los resultados de esta revisión, parece razonable recomendar con cautela el uso del cianoacrilato en el tratamiento de las várices gástricas, particularmente de las del tipo IGV1, dado que la menor tasa de recidiva de sangrado controla una de las variables más temidas y ominosas de esta afección. A la luz de estos resultados, el tratamiento con ligadura también es una opción, sobre todo en las várices del tipo GOV1, lo que aclara y permite el uso de un recurso que puede estar disponible donde la disponibilidad del cianoacrilato sea difícil.

Un dato muy importante es que los resultados de las comparaciones analizadas entre tratamiento con cianoacrilato y ligaduras elásticas viene de un total de 366 pacientes en total. De acuerdo con los análisis secuenciales la superioridad del cianoacrilato en prevenir el re-sangrado parece ser un efecto real y no estar influido por el error aleatorio, no así con los otros resultados (tanto los que muestran ventajas el cianoacrilato o a la ligadura) y podrían las tendencias o la falta de ellas podrían estar influidas por el azar al no alcanzar el poder estadístico suficiente para detectar diferencias. El efecto adverso más temido, el embolismo a órganos distales, solo ocurrió en un caso (y en un caso donde no se utilizó el cianoacrilato). Otros efectos colaterales fueron menores y no pusieron la vida de los pacientes en peligro.

Discusión de los resultados de la evaluación de la calidad de las guías de práctica clínica de tratamiento de hemorragia digestiva por ruptura de várices esófago gástricas.

El trabajo de evaluación de calidad de las guías clínicas sobre tratamiento de la hemorragia digestiva por sangrado de várices de esófago y estómago muestra que ha ido mejorando considerablemente en los últimos años, aunque la mayor parte de los documentos examinados presentan una calidad moderada. De las 23 guías evaluadas se consideraron que solo 10 estaban basadas en algún grado de evidencia, y de estas 5 no fueron recomendadas, sobre todo por falta de métodos rigurosos para buscar y evaluar la evidencia. De las cinco guías finalmente recomendadas, solo dos de ellas fueron fuertemente recomendadas principalmente porque tanto la búsqueda de la evidencia como su evaluación siguieron pautas rigurosas. Estos resultados son similares a otros estudios de evaluación de guías clínicas (111-114) y que muestran parecida mejoría en el tiempo, así como el hecho que las guías clínicas altamente recomendadas fueron desarrolladas por equipos desarrolladores bien estructurados dependientes de organismos públicos (NICE,

SIGN)(132,133), comparando con las guías desarrolladas por sociedades científicas que, en general tienen menor calidad (118-131).

Dentro del análisis de los dominios, en las 10 guías seleccionadas los mejor evaluados fueron los de claridad (9 sobre 10 > 70%), alcance y propósito, (7 sobre 10 guías > 70%, e independencia (5 sobre 10 > 70%). Los dominios peor evaluados fueron los de aplicabilidad (1 sobre 10 > 70%), stakeholders (2 sobre 10 sobre 70%) y rigor (2 sobre 10 > 70%).

El dominio de rigor se consideró el más importante, ya que se refiere a los aspectos metodológicos que tratan de cómo fueron desarrolladas las recomendaciones. Es en este ítem donde la calidad de las CPGs presentan las mayores diferencias, ya que solo dos logran puntajes altos y son las dos finalmente calificadas como altamente recomendadas (132, 133). El resto de las guías o no describen las estrategias de búsqueda de literatura, o no muestran claramente los métodos de selección de esta, además de ser poco precisos en cuanto a los datos concretos de la evaluación crítica de los artículos usados y de la calificación precisa de su evidencia. El promedio de este dominio es de 52.5%, lo que es preocupantemente bajo ya que este ítem es que califica a una guía como basada en evidencia, y resulta similar a otras evaluaciones de guías clínicas en otros ámbitos (113,114).

El dominio “stakeholders” también mostró deficiencias, y pocas guías (2 de 10) tomaron en cuenta explícitamente a pacientes o sus representantes (132,133). Es probable que la característica de la intervención, que usualmente debe realizarse de manera urgente, a cualquier hora y con decisiones de vida o muerte influya en este fenómeno.

En el dominio de “aplicabilidad” también hubo deficiencias importantes, con solo una guía explícita al respecto (132), y este fue el dominio donde más discusión y más desacuerdo existió entre los observadores, probablemente debido a la inexistencia de identificación explícita de barreras organizativas potenciales, de no considerar las recomendaciones los costos de la aplicación y no contar con criterios explícitos de monitorización. La identificación de facilitadores y de barreras para la implementación de las guías no es simple, y pueden existir variadas interpretaciones.

En el dominio “independencia editorial”, los resultados son similares a otros estudios de evaluación, ya que 6 guías proporcionan información sobre fuentes de financiación o declaración de conflicto de intereses, pero 4 guías no los mencionan. A pesar de ser una fuente clara de sesgo, este concepto no está totalmente internalizado en los desarrolladores de guías clínicas

Todos los anteriores resultados son similares a revisiones sistemáticas previas de evaluación de guías, exceptuando el dominio de “rigor” donde las guías de hemorragia variceal obtienen un porcentaje algo más bajo, y el dominio de “independencia editorial”, donde obtienen un puntaje algo más alto (111-114).

El análisis de los contenidos entre los documentos, resumidos en tablas, muestra alta consistencia, siendo las recomendaciones de las acciones a tomar muy similares, independientes del puntaje alcanzado, con algunas diferencias menores en el nivel de evidencia asignado así como en los grados de recomendación. Esto se debe probablemente al número limitado de artículos primarios que se repiten en todos los documentos y al hecho de que algunas guías están basadas en otras guías (118).

Por las características del problema a estudiar, se reconoce que no es fácil diseñar ensayos clínicos randomizados y ciegos en una situación clínica de emergencia, con opciones limitadas. Es por ello que la comunidad médica ha enfrentado este problema mediante la técnica del consenso, donde los mayores expertos tienen gran preponderancia, ya que existe una relativa pobreza de evidencia de alta calidad. El análisis de los documentos muestra que las guías basadas en la evidencia son relativamente recientes, una del año 2000 (115) y las demás luego del año 2004 (116-133). Con anterioridad (y posterioridad) a esas fechas se realizaron las reuniones conocidas como los consensos de Baveno, llamado así por la localidad de reunión. El último documento está considerado en la bibliografía de este artículo (117). La guía más citada de todas, más conocida y más utilizada está en gran parte realizada en base a esos consensos, y solo tuvo un puntaje moderado en nuestra evaluación debido a que el ítem de rigor es bajo por un análisis de evidencia relativamente limitada (120). Las dos mejores guías basadas en evidencia son las más recientes, de los años 2008 (132) y 2012 (133) respectivamente. Ambas fueron desarrolladas en el Reino Unido, alcanzaron también el mayor puntaje en el dominio de rigor y la mejor puntuada en esta evaluación tiene tan solo unos meses de publicada y es probable que tenga su mayor impacto en el futuro inmediato (133).

Nuestra evaluación tiene algunas limitaciones. Por un lado al seleccionar a las guías que manifiesten estar basadas en la evidencia, pueden dar la impresión que la calidad de los documentos es alta. Sin embargo, los puntajes obtenidos en el dominio de rigor en la elaboración son mediocres, siendo este dominio el que trata de la calidad de la evidencia. Excepto una, ninguna de las guías evaluadas considera el instrumento GRADE de calificación de evidencia. Algunas de las guías, estando muy bien presentadas, están basadas en otras guías que a su vez no tienen mucha fortaleza en su nivel de evidencia (118, 116). En este sentido también el instrumento AGREE tiene la característica de no poder determinar el impacto de las recomendaciones en los resultados esperados en el paciente. El hecho que la guía más citada no tenga la

calidad de otras de mejor calidad puede estar relacionado con el hecho de que es un documento relativamente corto, disponible y fácil de leer, mientras que las mejores guías desde el punto de vista metodológico son documentos más largos, extensos y no amigables con los clínicos a pesar de que tuvieron alto puntaje en el ítem de claridad, ya que se deben buscar en sitios específicos no muy conocidos por los clínicos y dentro de los que se debe navegar para llegar a los resúmenes. Otras limitaciones son la inclusión de guías en idiomas inglés y castellano. El uso exclusivo del inglés podría implicar un sesgo de selección que favoreciera a las guías de mayor calidad. La inclusión de al menos una guía en castellano, así como otras de origen latinoamericano, indio, malayo, belga o chino (aunque escritas en inglés) puede disminuir este sesgo.

Las fortalezas de esta evaluación se basan en la búsqueda lo más exhaustiva y sistemática posible, buscando no solo las bases de datos sino todas las referencias y citas de cada artículo encontrado. Si bien no se puede asegurar que no existan otras guías de alta calidad (sobre todo en otros idiomas), se hicieron los esfuerzos posibles para no pasarlas por alto. El alto grado de acuerdo entre los revisores hace confiable la evaluación tanto para la evaluación de los dominios como para la calificación general de las guías. De hecho, las mayores discrepancias y discusiones estuvieron relacionadas con los dominios de independencia y de aplicabilidad, que tienen dificultades de interpretación especiales, dado cierto grado de subjetividad teórica en los criterios del instrumento AGREE, siendo en cambio muy consistentes en el dominio de rigor de la elaboración, donde existe un grado de objetividad mayor.

En resumen, la revisión de la calidad de las guías en el tratamiento de la hemorragia variceal muestra una mejoría gradual de los documentos, desde aquellos realizados por consenso hasta aquellos realizadas en base a análisis riguroso de la mejor evidencia disponible y trabajadas con equipos multidisciplinarios, que con adherencia a instrumentos como el AGREE o similares durante su desarrollo, logran elaborar guías clínicas de alta calidad. Nuestros resultados muestran la importancia de que todas las guías clínicas desarrolladas sobre el tema deberían mejorar su calidad al nivel de las recomendadas, ya que estas guías se desarrollan para apoyar a la toma de decisiones de vital importancia para los pacientes tratados, y son además un paso fundamental en el proceso de transferencia de conocimientos.

6.2 Discusión de los aspectos generales del trabajo de tesis

De todo el arsenal médico para tratar la hemorragia variceal de esófago o estómago, los tratamientos endoscópicos de la hemorragia variceal son los más eficaces y por lo tanto suelen ser usados en la primera línea del enfrentamiento de la emergencia, concomitantemente o no con otras posibilidades como el uso de drogas

vasoactivas o las intervenciones radiológicas intervencionistas o quirúrgicas de acuerdo las condiciones de cada centro, las que suelen ser muy variables (5, 10, 12-22)

Los ensayos clínicos aleatorizados que evalúan la eficacia de los métodos endoscópicos suelen tener algunos problemas especiales. Si bien los sistemas de aleatorización se aplican de manera uniforme, el control de sesgos suele estar complicado por la imposibilidad de lograr el doble ciego, ya que no es posible cegar al médico que realiza la intervención, y las dificultades evidentes en el enmascaramiento de los pacientes y del personal tanto en la intervención como en la evaluación de los resultados, al ser procedimientos evidentes en su aplicación y en su control. Concretamente, la utilización de los sistemas de ligadura son radicalmente diferentes a la inyección de esclerosantes, y ambos son diferentes a la inyección de cianoacrilato. Cualquier persona con mínima experiencia puede darse cuenta al observar los procedimientos, la pantalla de los endoscopios e incluso los efectos que se marcan en los órganos afectados de los pacientes cuál procedimiento se está o se utilizó en caso de los controles posteriores. Al igual que varios procedimientos quirúrgicos, estas características degradan sistemáticamente la calidad de la evidencia al presentar un sesgo difícil de dominar (67, 69-73).

La calidad de la evidencia también se puede comprometer por la presencia de heterogeneidad, lo que especialmente significativo en las várices gástricas. Los pacientes con sangrado variceal puede hacerlo desde varios tipos de várices, las que presentan características que tienen riesgos diferentes entre sí, también los pacientes pueden tener etiologías diferentes de su hipertensión portal, grados de compromiso de la enfermedad básica muy diferentes, presencia de complicaciones como el hepatocarcinoma y otros, y por los motivos explicados en el párrafo anterior pueden haber sido tratados o no con terapias concomitantes. Algunos de los ensayos clínicos que toman en cuenta estas diferencias, obtienen estratos de análisis con números pequeños. Otros ensayos agrupan a todos los pacientes en análisis comunes, logrando mayores tamaños muestrales pero comprometiendo la homogeneidad de los pacientes. Esta realidad degrada la evidencia por la imprecisión y la heterogeneidad de comparar poblaciones que en realidad pueden ser diferentes.

El factor de imprecisión resulta una característica importante en el caso del tratamiento endoscópico con cianoacrilato. La hemorragia por várices gástricas tiene muy baja prevalencia, e incluso los centros grandes o los estudios multicéntricos solo suelen reunir menos de 100 pacientes en temporadas largas. Los estudios de un solo centro suelen tener entre 30 y 60 pacientes en total, lo que compromete al control de los errores α y β (69-73).

Tomando en cuenta estas dificultades, de los ensayos clínicos y metaanálisis realizados en los diversos tipos de tratamiento, se ha ido afirmando el tratamiento

endoscópico como primera línea en la hemorragia variceal (12-22). En el caso de las hemorragias por várices esofágicas, la evidencia reunida hasta el momento favorece a la ligadura endoscópica sobre otro tipo de tratamiento, y dentro de ella la ligadura ha logrado demostrar superioridad sobre la esclerosis con diversas sustancias, algunas dudas que aún quedaban comparados con los compuestos de alcohol están siendo paulatinamente aclaradas con trabajos mejor planificados y con números muestrales mayores. La investigación de campo presentado en este trabajo de tesis contribuye en esa dirección. En el caso de las várices gástricas, a todas las dificultades expuestas en las várices esofágicas su suman los subtipos ya explicados con sus comportamientos diferentes y su baja prevalencia, lo que degrada la evidencia y dificulta la toma de decisiones. El trabajo de revisión sistemática pretende contribuir al conocimiento en esa dirección, aunque una contribución no menos importante es la de mostrar las múltiples dificultades que explican el por qué la evidencia disponible no sea capaz aún de favorecer claramente a la opción terapéutica planteada en este trabajo.

Lo expuesto anteriormente se refleja en las guías clínicas existentes sobre el tema de hemorragia variceal. Muchas de estas guías toman las intervenciones en las várices dentro del tema general de la hemorragia digestiva por todas las causas, y resulta llamativo ver la relativa pobreza de los ensayos clínicos disponibles en la hemorragia variceal (especialmente la gástrica) comparado con el gran cuerpo de evidencia de las hemorragias pépticas, por poner un ejemplo. La evaluación de las guías de hemorragia variceal realizada como parte de este trabajo de tesis también pretende tener la virtud de demostrar no solo la calidad de estas, sino la relativa pobreza de su contenido y la poca base de ensayos en los que descansan la mayor parte de sus recomendaciones.

Enmarcados en lo anterior, los trabajos presentados en este trabajo de tesis han cumplido sus objetivos planteados con diferentes grados de niveles de evidencia.

La superioridad demostrada en el trabajo de campo de la ligadura endoscópica de várices comparada con la esclerosis endoscópica con etanolamina, si bien es estadísticamente significativa en los dos resultados deseados (disminución del re-sangrado y la mortalidad general), proviene de un trabajo observacional con nivel de evidencia medio (2b), y con la presencia de posibles sesgos dada la naturaleza retrospectiva de una de sus dos cohortes. De alguna manera esta debilidad es compensada tanto por la consistencia mostrada por sus resultados frente a metanálisis de ensayos clínicos, la distribución similar de todo el espectro de las covariables entre los grupos, y un número muestral adecuado para lograr suficiente potencia estadística. Además, este procedimiento puede tener ventajas no medidas en este trabajo, como la corta permanencia hospitalaria (24 horas, por lo general frente a varios días o semanas del otro procedimiento), y del hecho que los pacientes, que ingresan en estado de extrema gravedad, por lo general salen del hospital caminando y pueden

reanudar su vida normal en el tiempo posterior inmediato, ventajas que han sido descritas y medidas en otros trabajos (136, 137). Todos estos factores más la creciente curva de aprendizaje en los profesionales que la utilizan hacen que el método de ligadura endoscópica sea el recomendado como la primera opción de tratamiento en hemorragia por várices esofágicas, y así debería considerarse en toda las guías clínicas, probablemente sin necesidad de otros trabajos de investigación.

Dentro del tratamiento endoscópico de las várices esofágicas existen una serie de preguntas complementarias que se desprenden de las brechas del conocimiento y que aún no tienen respuestas, y que deben ser investigadas a futuro, por ejemplo: ¿cuando comenzar la profilaxis primaria de las várices esofágicas con ligaduras?; ¿cómo enfrentar el sangrado de várices esofágicas pequeñas (grado I a II) en pacientes con hipertensión portal agresiva de corta duración, donde no hay substrato anatómico para conseguir una buena ligadura?; ¿Cómo tratar los sangrados que no provienen de una várice en esófagos variceales?; ¿Cuál es la frecuencia ideal para realizar profilaxis secundaria?; ¿Es el método helicoidal de ligadura el mejor para el mejor control de las várices?. Estas brechas del conocimiento se han ido formulando a medida de que la eficacia del tratamiento ha ido mostrando complicaciones más sutiles y las respuestas que se consigan podrán mejorar aún más el adecuado manejo de los pacientes.

La superioridad demostrada por el uso de la esclerosis endoscópica con cianoacrilato en la hemorragia por várices gástricas frente a la esclerosis con compuestos de alcohol, ha resultado menos sólida de lo que las guías clínicas y el conjunto de la literatura lo planteaba, principalmente por la imprecisión de los resultados causada por los bajos números de pacientes en el único ensayo clínico controlado identificado, y alto de riesgo de sesgo causado por la falta del doble ciego. Podría ser considerada con un nivel de evidencia 1c (87). De todas maneras, la consistencia de este ensayo controlado con el resto del cuerpo de conocimientos obtenidos por diversos diseños hacen razonable el recomendar con cautela este método sobre la esclerosis con alcohol. Cabe aclarar que por sus propias características este último método está siendo abandonado en la mayoría de los centros.

La superioridad demostrada por el uso de la esclerosis endoscópica con cianoacrilato en la hemorragia por várices gástricas frente a la ligadura endoscópica es relativamente clara cuando se trata de evitar el re-sangrado, y para este objetivo los resultados parecen no depender del azar, ni de la heterogeneidad causada por las diferencias entre los ensayos clínicos. Sin embargo estos resultados debe nuevamente tomarse con cautela ya que todos los trabajos presentan baja calidad por la presencia de alto riesgo de sesgo principalmente por falta de doble ciego. El nivel de evidencia para este objetivo se sitúa entre 1a y 2a. Sin embargo, en los otros objetivos del tratamiento, como el éxito de la intervención para detener el sangrado, la mortalidad,

la obliteración, la falla del tratamiento y las complicaciones, el cianoacrilato no presenta ventajas estadísticamente significativas, presentando además alto riesgo de sesgos y parece razonable plantear la necesidad de adicionales ensayos clínicos preferentemente multicéntricos, para obviar la relativa baja prevalencia del sangrado por este tipo de várices, con ensayos bien estandarizados en todas las variables detalladas durante este trabajo. Es probable que el azar tenga un papel importante en estos resultados, y que la falta de superioridad del cianoacrilato pueda deberse a la falta de potencia estadística. Por el momento, y dada la actual evidencia parece razonable recomendar con cautela el uso del cianoacrilato como primera opción, sobre todo en várices del tipo IGV1, dejando la posibilidad de uso de la ligadura sobre todo en las várices gástricas tipo GOV1. En todos los ensayos con cianoacrilato, no ha sido posible demostrar que el uso concomitante de drogas vasoactivas sea o no de utilidad. Es importante además, hacer notar que la prevalencia de complicaciones ominosas, como la embolia a órganos distales que provocó muchas comunicaciones (50-56). A diferencia del tratamiento de las várices esofágicas, la falta de claridad en la eficacia del cianoacrilato en todos los resultados de interés dejan muchas brechas en el conocimiento, como la cantidad total ideal de dosis a utilizar, el manejo de la profilaxis primaria, el uso concomitante de otros tratamientos, como las drogas vasoactivas y la claridad del tipo de tratamiento a utilizar para cada tipo de várices gástricas.

La diferencia de calidad entre las guías de práctica clínica es evidente, y aquellas realizadas por equipos de trabajo multidisciplinarios con objetivos claros y basados en la evidencia son superiores a un gran número de guías de práctica clínica que sufren de deficiencias en alguno de los aspectos evaluados por un instrumento del tipo del AGREE. El haber analizado las guías disponibles y haber presentado una publicación donde estos resultados están claramente mostrados, desde la definición de conceptos, el proceso de búsqueda e identificación de guías clínicas, los métodos detallados usados en su evaluación, más un análisis de su contenido, consideramos que puede ser un aporte significativo a los usuarios de estos instrumentos, que cuentan ahora con una evaluación independiente, y además puede ser una contribución a los desarrolladores de guías clínicas, al mostrar un sistema de evaluación en la práctica. Los resultados de los dos primeros trabajos pueden suponer una contribución concreta para las guías, aportando efectivamente con conocimientos útiles basados en la evidencia.

Este trabajo de tesis doctoral creemos que puede contribuir al conocimiento en un tema que presenta retos importantes, muchas veces de vida o muerte en personas que sufren estas enfermedades. Al lograr tres publicaciones, ha logrado identificar brechas en el conocimiento y la práctica y poder recomendar dos terapias que pueden ayudar efectivamente a la toma de decisiones por parte de los prestadores de salud que enfrentan estos problemas usualmente en condiciones de emergencia, así como la planificación adecuada de la implementación de equipos de trabajo, equipamiento,

compra de insumos adecuados y adiestramiento de personal. El equipo de investigación que realizó el trabajo fue el primero en beneficiarse, ya que la práctica adquirida con ellos le ha permitido afiatarse, logrando una reducción efectiva importate de la mortalidad por estas causas en la región, además de poder desarrollar una línea de investigación de acuerdo a las preguntas formuladas anteriormente.

Los procesos metodológicos utilizados creemos que fueron los adecuados para dar las respuestas a las preguntas de investigación, y para contestar a las nuevas preguntas surgidas durante el desarrollo de los trabajos. Las respuestas obtenidas, por lo tanto, las creemos válidas dentro de sus límites y permitirán la continuidad de las líneas de investigación futuras planteadas. Este continuo finalmente pretende proveer de evidencia útil para contestar preguntas cuyas respuestas permitan mejorar progresivamente la salud de las personas.

CONCLUSIONES

7. CONCLUSIONES

A continuación se presentan las conclusiones derivadas de los objetivos específicos de cada uno de los estudios y cómo los resultados pueden contribuir a la práctica clínica y a la investigación.

7.1. Conclusiones específicas de cada trabajo

- La ligadura endoscópica es superior a la escleroterapia con monoetanolamina disminuyendo la mortalidad general, la mortalidad específica por sangrado y la recidiva del sangrado por várices esofágicas.
- El uso de cianoacrilato es superior a la ligadura endoscópica para disminuir la recidiva del sangrado y es superior a los compuestos de alcohol disminuyendo la mortalidad, la recidiva del sangrado y las complicaciones en las várices gástricas. La calidad de la evidencia obliga a tomar estas conclusiones con cautela.
- La calidad general de las guías clínicas en el tratamiento de la hemorragia por várices de esófago y estómago es baja a moderada. Los sistemas de formulación de las recomendaciones son inconsistentes y existen fallas importantes en su implementación.

7.2. Implicaciones para la práctica

- El uso de la ligadura endoscópica presenta ventajas sobre los otros métodos en el control del sangrado por várices esofágicas. La generalización de su uso en los servicios de endoscopia que aún no lo han implementado implica la adquisición de los sistemas de ligadura y la adquisición de la experiencia de los operadores, con una curva de aprendizaje en un tiempo razonable. Dados los resultados consistentes de este y otros trabajos, es de esperar que todos los servicios de endoscopia terapéutica puedan contar con este sistema a corto plazo.
- El uso del cianoacrilato presenta menor resangrado en várices gástricas que la ligadura endoscópica y que la esclerosis con alcohol. La generalización de su uso es más compleja, ya que requiere una experiencia importante por parte de los operadores debido a las dificultades técnicas que presenta su uso. La baja prevalencia de esta complicación impide adquirir una experiencia adecuada en centros pequeños o que no sean de referencia. Si bien el costo no es un problema mayor, la delicadeza requerida para su uso, el potencial daño a los equipos, y el temor a las complicaciones (en parte

despejadas por el trabajo de revisión sistemática), probablemente dificulten su implementación generalizada.

- La calidad de las guías de práctica clínica muestran la necesidad de grupos desarrolladores multidisciplinares, que consideren relevantes los temas que actualmente parecen más débiles como la aplicabilidad y consideren herramientas prácticas para su implementación en los centros que pudieran adoptarlas. El rigor de la elaboración de guías debe ser primordial, con metodologías explícitas de búsqueda y evaluación de la información y uso de herramientas avanzadas como el sistema GRADE.

7.3.- Implicaciones para la investigación

- La consistencia de la superioridad del uso de las ligaduras endoscópicas en la literatura universal, y las ventajas de su uso e implementación, hacen que probablemente no haya necesidad de más estudios comparativos con otras terapias ya conocidas.
- La aparente falta de potencia estadística y presencia de sesgos de la inyección de cianoacrilato en el tratamiento de las várices gástricas deberían enfrentarse con ensayos clínicos aleatorizados multicéntricos que tengan definiciones claras en los tiempos (sangrado agudo, detenido, resangrado, mortalidad) y estratificación adecuada de las características de los pacientes, además de realizar esfuerzos destinados a conseguir el doble ciego.
- Siendo la mejoría de la calidad de las guías clínicas lo fundamental, es importante también explicitar herramientas para su implementación, y monitorizar el grado de aplicación de sus recomendaciones, para finalmente poder evaluar el impacto que puedan tener estas guías en los problemas de salud que pretende ayudar a resolver.

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ANEXOS

ANEXO 1

Carta de aceptación provisional de la revisión sistemática por parte del grupo hepatobiliar de la Colaboración Cochrane.



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The Cochrane Hepato Biliary Group (The CHBG)

30.09.2014

Re: Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension. A Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Systematic Review

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

As a Co-ordinating Editor of the Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group, I would like to inform that the authors of the Cochrane Systematic Review entitled 'Endoscopic injection of cyanoacrylate glue versus other endoscopic procedures for acute bleeding gastric varices in patients with portal hypertension' with a first author Dr Eddy Ríos Castellanos have successfully completed the editorial process within the Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group.

This review will soon be now sent to the Central Editorial Unit of the Cochrane Collaboration for a standard screening process after which the review will proceed to copy-editing before we submit it for publication in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, part of The Cochrane Library.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Christian Gluud, M.D., Dr. Med. Sci.
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