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Letter to the Editor

Comment on "The effect of preoperative hormonal stimulation on the urethral plate; A histologic and histochemical study": Which hormone, which plate, which reduction?

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"The effect of Preoperative Hormonal Stimulation on the urethral plate; A Histologic and Histochemical Study" is an interesting study on how the authors reach to a conclusion regarding the treatment of chordee (ventral curvature) in hypospadias [1]. First, the preoperative hormone stimulation (PHS) regimen used in this study is an outdated study in which a 10% testosterone ointment (testosterone propionate) was applied to the penis (Ref. no 7). This study found that after three weeks of testosterone administration for microphallic hypospadias, circulating testosterone levels were within the range of adult values that may pose a risk for accelerated longitudinal growth and premature bone maturation. It was also concluded that parenteral administration of testosterone may be safer for reliable prediction of blood values [2]. For this reason, using testosterone ointment twice daily for one to two months is difficult to understand, as it is more harmful. In addition, the duration of testosterone use (1–2 months) shows that some patients received twice the amount before the surgery than others. Do the authors believe that their study is based on solid and reliable evidence?

Second, the authors conclude that they have documented the effect of testosterone on the urethral plate in hypospadias with severe chordee and that the results of their study may justify testosterone administration before the first operation to improve the vascularity and *"reduce the severity of chordee"*. Increased vascularity of the skin/foreskin is a well-known effect of local administration of testosterone/dihydrotestosterone. However, this study does not reveal any clinical or histological findings, i.e. variables that could be associated with the severity of chordee and/or its correction by testosterone administration. It is interesting to read how the severity of a chordee can be reduced without any relevant parameters, but by administering an outdated and harmful hormone treatment.

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Declaration of competing interest

None.

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