

tion is performed once the tip of the LMA cuff has entered the hypopharynx and is accompanied by a "distinctive pop felt by the introducing hand". Our concern is that immediately anterior to the hypopharynx are the arytenoid cartilages. We postulate that rotation of the bulky LMA cuff in such close proximity might cause arytenoid dislocation, a major complication commonly requiring surgical correction. We suggest that those who prefer the "Charlottetown Twist" follow-up their patients for speech problems, particularly if the "distinctive pop" is accompanied by a "catastrophic click".

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#### REPLY:

*Dr. Brimacombe did not contest our contention that our insertion technique may be less traumatic. He also agreed that it makes the insertion of the LMA easier on occasion. He condemned us on a motive that would condemn all blind methods of tracheal intubation such as the use of the light wand or the fiberoptic bronchoscope. It is our belief that the soft, blunt, inflated distal cuff of the LMA probably causes less trauma than direct laryngoscopy on laryngeal structures. We did not come across any cases of arytenoid dislocation in our extensive use of the LMA.*

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#### *Does smoking really increase the requirements for rocuronium?*

To the Editor:

We read with interest the recent article by Rautoma and Svartling<sup>1</sup> but we would like to add some comments. On the basis of the data presented, the headline stating "Smoking increases the requirement for rocuronium" seems not to be justified because the changes observed failed to reach statistical significance ( $P = 0.0504$ ). We started a similar study four months ago, using target controlled infusions of rocuronium to determine the dose requirements in smokers and non-smokers and expect to be completed by the end of 1998. A preliminary power analysis based on the data of a study from Latorre *et al.*<sup>2</sup> revealed a minimum of at least 37 patients per group to find a statistically significant effect of rocuronium in smokers. We, therefore, speculate that the number of patients in the study of Rautoma and Svartling was too small. In

addition, we would like to point out that rocuronium, in contrast to vecuronium, is eliminated through the liver without undergoing metabolism.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the P-450 mixed oxidase pathway should not be of any influence in the elimination of rocuronium.

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#### REFERENCES

- 1 Rautoma P, Svartling N. Smoking increases the requirement for rocuronium. *Can J Anaesth* 1998; 45: 651-4.
- 2 Latorre F, de Almeida MCS, Stanek A, Kleemann PP. The interaction between rocuronium and smoking. The effect of smoking on neuromuscular transmission after rocuronium. (German) *Anaesthesist* 1997; 46: 493-5.
- 3 Wierda JMKH, Kleef UW, Lambalk LM, Kloppenburg WD, Agoston S. The pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of Org 9426, a new non-depolarizing neuromuscular blocking agent, in patients anaesthetized with nitrous oxide, halothane and fentanyl. *Can J Anaesth* 1991; 38: 430-5.

#### *Anesthesia in Poland syndrome*

To the Editor:

We read with interest the case report "Anaesthesia in Poland syndrome."<sup>1</sup> Since the authors focused on potential respiratory problems associated with anaesthesia in children with musculo-skeletal disease of the thoracic cage, we would like to stress another major potential risk factor. Children with musculo-skeletal diseases show an exceptional risk of developing succinylcholine-related complications including cardiac arrest. The addition of halothane to maintain anaesthesia potentiates the risk for malignant hyperthermia.

Sethuraman *et al.* described Moebius syndrome as an extreme expression of Poland anomaly; the association between both syndromes has been emphasized in several reports.<sup>2,3</sup> While succinylcholine is contraindicated in degenerative diseases of cranial nerve motor nuclei such as Moebius syndrome,<sup>4</sup> the association between this disease and Poland syndrome should raise concern about the use of depolarizing muscle relaxants under these circumstances. Reports of trismus in neonates as part of developmental