Are drains required following a routine primary total joint arthroplasty? Reply to comment by Al-Naser

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Dear Editor,

We thank Dr. Al-Naser for his interest and comments about our paper [1]. We all agree that drains should not be used routinely in arthroplasty [2, 3]. We have shown tables for the observations of knee and hip arthroplasties separately and in combination. There was no significant difference when the statistical analysis was done separately or in combination for both types of arthroplasties. Since ours is a district general hospital and not a teaching hospital, having uniformity in procedure and perioperative care for a large cohort of patients was not possible.

We agree that a prospective randomised study, taking into account confounding factors; such as patient selection, well matched patients in each group, maintaining uniformity in surgical procedure and perioperative care will really help in resolving this issue. The issue of blood loss in cement vs

uncemented arthroplasty will need to be studied separately taking care of confounding factors. Finally the routine use of suction drain is unnecessary after an uncomplicated total joint arthroplasty but this decision has to be taken on each individual-case basis.

References

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This reply refers to the letter that can be found at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s00264-007-0497-4>.

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