Response to "Negative Results Do Not Imply Absence of Ototoxicity with Middle Ear Application of Neomycin"

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We appreciate Dr Antonelli’s interest in ototopical medications and his ambitious investigations published in the February 2013 issue of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery. However, our study does not address the use of drops in an office setting. Our study provides class B evidence of the safety (as defined by incidence of SNHL) of use of PNH in tympanoplasty.

Dr Antonelli’s study is based on billing records that include or do not include a diagnosis of SNHL. The vagaries of which diagnoses are listed on a billing record are myriad and not comparable to hard analysis of pre- and post-treatment audiometry. Interestingly, the studies by Lippy that do address repeated topical use of PNH (the same setting as in Dr Antonelli’s study) using pre- and post-treatment audiometry demonstrate no evidence of SNHL.

We stand by our assertion that more rigorous (class A or B) evidence-based studies should be used to make clinical recommendations.

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