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A modified supraglottic airway for gastroscopy – an advance in patient safety?

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In this edition of the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*, Terblanche and colleagues describe preliminary clinical experience with the LMA[®] Gastro[™], a modified supraglottic airway designed for airway maintenance and security during upper gastrointestinal endoscopy.¹ Thirty anaesthetists successfully deployed the device in 290/292 patients. Endoscopy was achieved in 98%.

Clinicians are presented with a new device designed for a single clinical circumstance (albeit a common one). We should therefore ask whether the problem that the device sets out to solve is real, whether the device addresses it effectively, and reflect whether the apparatus is a useful addition to the clinical environment. The LMA[®] Gastro[™] is not the only contender in this product area. Recently an “endoscopic mask” has been described, but that device appears to comprise a facemask with an integrated Guedel airway and no form of airway protection from aspiration of gastric contents.^{2,3}

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