To the Editor:
I take great interest in the work of the recently published article by Stewart et al that investigated endotracheal cuff pressures.1

I have conducted similar pressure samplings consistent with the article’s findings and have used a continuous direct cuff pressure monitor from a standard arterial line kit (Abbott’s Transpac IV Monitoring Kit, Chicago, Ill) and a standard arterial line monitor to monitor cuff pressures during various types of neck surgery.

To create an endotracheal cuff monitor, begin with an arterial line kit and remove both the heparin inflow line and the exit line from the transducer. Replace the inflow line with a small syringe and replace the exit line with the additional small, approximately 3-inch length of tubing that comes with the Transpac. Change the arterial monitor to a central venous monitor mode or scale, and the monitor is complete.

I believe that endotracheal cuff pressure monitoring will become a standard when reliable and consistent readings become available.

REFERENCE

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Response:
We are pleased to see others’ attention to this issue. One of the authors (Stewart) has used the technique Karnes described to monitor pressure during cases. Moreover, there is literature describing it, but there are no reports with data or recommendations other than as a technique for dynamic pressure monitoring. We hope to see direct monitoring of intracuff pressures become standard routine.

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A COMPARISON OF ENDOTRACHEAL TUBE CUFF PRESSURES USING ESTIMATION TECHNIQUES AND DIRECT INTRACUFF MEASUREMENT