

Author's response to reviews

Title: Effect of statin therapy on the progression of coronary atherosclerosis

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Author's response to reviews:

Response to Dr. Grzegorz Kopec's comments:

We are very grateful for your comments regarding our manuscript. We revised the manuscript in accordance with your advice. Given below are the point-by-point responses to your comments.

Question 1: PCV should be changed to plaque composition in all parts of the text.

Answer: The term "PCV" has been replaced by "plaque composition" in all parts of the text.

Question 2: Page 4 line 13 should be ...and change in plaque composition.

Answer: We have deleted the term "plaque composition volume (PCV)" and changed it to "plaque composition".

Question 3: Page 6 line 20 "evacuated" should be replaced with "withdrawn".

Answer: The term "evacuated" has been replaced by "withdrawn" in the revised manuscript.

Question4: Page 7 line 5 (iii) shouldn't it be "type and dose of statin"?

Answer: We have changed it.

Question5: Page 7 line 7 : in which studies did the authors contact the investigators and whether they were provided with appropriate data.

Answer: We tried to obtain appropriate data from the investigators, but we were not successful.

Response to Dr. Gregory Makris's Comments:

We are grateful for this positive review.

Question1: The addition of two co-authors whose exact contribution to the original paper and the revised version has not been explained. As long as no additional data analysis or experiments are performed it is indeed unusual to grant authorship for contributions to a revision.

Answer: BY conceived of the idea underpinning the study, and BY, JT, XG, and YS contributed to the study design. XG conducted the literature review. JT, SH, and YX undertook the data extraction. BY, YS, JT, and XB were involved in consensus agreements concerning data discrepancies. YX designed and YX and JT conducted the statistical analyses. XB, YX, and SH participated in data interpretation. JT, BY, and XB drafted and revised the manuscript.

We added YS and XB as co-authors for their contribution to this study. They spent a lot of time and effort for the work described above. At the first submission of the manuscript, we wanted to add YS and XB as co-authors to reflect their contributions, but they are very selfless and accepted only our verbal thanks. They also played an important part in rewriting the article for re-submission. We agreed that it was necessary to add them as co-authors of this manuscript to respect their physical and intellectual contribution to this study. They accepted our decision and permitted us to add their names.

Question2: The reviewer was still concerned about the inclusion of studies only until October 2010.

Answer: In accordance with your very helpful suggestion we undertook a PubMed literature search until December 2011. Five relevant articles were identified (Korean Circ J. 2011; 41:641–8; Circ J. 2012; 76:176–83; Circ J. 2011; 75:1448–54; N Engl J Med. 2011; 365:2078–87; Circ J. 2011; 75:398–406). We have stated clearly that the main analysis of our study focuses on articles published before October 2010 but that since then five articles have been published whose principal results are shown in the Supplementary Material but are not included in the formal analysis. Those articles further supported our conclusion that statin therapy (especially that involving a high dose and long duration and achieving LDL-C levels <100 mg/dL) could significantly decrease plaque volume in patients with coronary heart disease (Korean Circ J. 2011; 41:641–8; Circ J. 2011; 75:1448–54; N Engl J Med. 2011; 365:2078–87). In agreement with our conclusion, statin use does not lead to significant changes in plaque composition (Circ J. 2012; 76:176–83). Follow-up LDL-C level is associated with plaque progression in patients with intermediate coronary stenosis (Circ J. 2011; 75:398–406). The content about this topic has been added (lines 2–4, page 7; lines 21 and 22, page 12; lines 1–2, page 13; lines 19–20, page 13; and lines 21–22, page 14). We have added supplementary material as Supplementary Tables 1 and 2 to the revised manuscript.