Reviewer's report

Title: Intubating conditions and side effects of propofol, remifentanil and sevoflurane compared with propofol, remifentanil and rocuronium: a randomised, prospective, clinical trial

Version: 2 Date: 18 February 2014

Reviewer: Vladimir Nekhendzy

Reviewer's report:

This is a well done study, but its results, unfortunately, were predictable.

There was no reason to expect, in my opinion, that the addition of sevoflurane to remifentanil, especially at 0.5 MAC only, would provide acceptable intubating conditions in a large number of patients. The studies have shown that a very high concentration of Sevo (ED95 8%) is required to intubate the trachea during the inhalational induction, and even then the intubating conditions are inferior to the ones achieved with the neuromuscular blockers.

In addition, multiple studies have documented that the avoidance of neuromuscular blockade increases the risk of difficult tracheal intubation and difficult mask ventilation.

As authors correctly point out, acceptable conditions may be achieved with IV alfentanil/remifentanil and propofol only, if avoidance of NMB is desired. In that regard, doses of remifentanil 4 mcg/kg are not usually required to produce acceptable conditions for intubation under propofol anesthesia; 2-3 mcg/kg is usually sufficient.

The authors may wish to review the following references:

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.