Reviewer’s report

Title: Plasma NT pro-BNP, hs-CRP and big-ET levels at admission as prognostic markers of survival in patients with dilated cardiomyopathy

Version: 3 Date: 20 February 2014

Reviewer: Nicole Ebner

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Li et al. analyzed predictors of mortality in patients with dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM). They followed 622 patients over a mean of 2.6 years and showed that NT-pro BNP and hs CRP are independently predictive for mortality with a cutoff point of NT-proBNP < 2247 pmol/L and hs CRP < 3.90 mg/L. This manuscript is very interesting and NT proBNP seems to be a strong predictor of adverse outcomes in patients with DCM.

Discretionary Revisions:
I was confused about such high cutoff value of NT-proBNP. In literature mostly a lower cutoff value of NT-proBNP were used. (Prastaro M et al. Eur J Echocardiogr 2011, 12(7):506-13. doi: 10.1093/ejechocard/jer070) used a NT-pro-BNP cut-off of 1480 pg/mL (174.64 pmol/L) to identified LA dysfunction. Also from literatureTigen K et al. (Heart Lung Circ. 2007;16(4):290-4) showed that the event free survival was found to be significantly lower in patients with NT proBNP levels > 4500 pg/ml (> 531 pmol/L). The ESC Heart Failure guidelines postulated a NT-pro BNP value of 300 pg/ml (35.4 pmol/L) which is much lower than the cutoff point that was used in this manuscript. Mahadavan G et al. recently (Curr Opin Cardiol. 2014, 29(2):160-6. doi: 10.1097/HOC.0000000000000036) stated that Interleukin 1-beta is also useful for risk stratification. May be it is additionally useful to measure IL-1β in these patients.

Minor Essential Revisions:
Page 8: please change „1119 patients with DCM“ in 622 patients with DCM
Page 8 “For mortality, the optimal cutoff of 0.95 pmol/L...” please specify that this cutoff was for bigET.

References are not all in the same style, for example some journals are kursiv and some not. The actual literature in the manuscript is from 2008. It would be helpful to update your references.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.