Author's response to reviews

Title: A systematic review of intravenous gamma globulin for therapy of acute myocarditis

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Re: MS 1379753363898719

Dear Editor,

I am submitting the revised version of this manuscript. The reviewers comments have been addressed as follows:

Reviewer 1 (Bernhard Maisch) - November 6, 2004

The reviewer brings up many practical points, which we address as follows:

1. We agree it would be useful to be able to include more trials, but think we have found all trials that fulfill our study criteria. We now clarify in the methods that we deliberately excluded trials of hyperimmunoglobulin. The reason for this is that the efficacy of the product may be determined by the accuracy of the diagnosis (especially with use of varicella hyperimmunoglobulin, which may not contain antibodies to other viruses), and that hyperimmunoglobulin products are probably less uniform than are other IVGG products - recognizing that lack of uniformity of product is a large problem with any IVGG study. However, we now mention positive results from trials with hyperimmunoglobulin in the discussion. As suggested, we now try to emphasize that the majority of the patients in the one randomized controlled trial of IVGG may not have had myocarditis.

2. We agree that IVGG appears to usually be a safe product for use in myocarditis, but found one case of hemolytic anemia in the recent literature which we now include in the review.

3. We emphasize that future trials should emphasize studying the efficacy of IVGG in myocarditis caused by different etiologic agents.

Reviewer 2 (Daniel Levi)
We appreciate the repeat review and the comments. We agree the inclusion and exclusion criteria were not clear, and have changed this section.

We have changed Table 2 so it is no longer cut off. We are not sure why Figure 1 was blank, and will try to correct this problem.

Reviewer 3 (systematic review expert)

As suggested, we have also reviewed studies from 2003 and 2004 and have added relevant case reports.

Yours sincerely,

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