Reviewer's report

Title: Passive Tobacco Exposure Impairs Symptomatic Improvement in Patients with Chronic Angina Undergoing Enhanced External Counterpulsation

Version: 1 Date: 1 October 2007

Reviewer: Joaquin Barnoya

Reviewer's report:

General
I reviewed the paper "Passive Tobacco Exposure Impairs Symptomatic Improvement in Patients with Chronic Angina Undergoing Enhanced External Counterpulsation" by Efstratiadis et al. that describes how secondhand smoke exposure negatively influences angina treatment.

1. Paper reads well, some editing is needed and abbreviations should be carefully reviewed.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. There's needs to be a clear comparison between non-smokers (exposed and non-exposed to SHS) and current smokers. The analysis is not consistent in using the control group. Non-smokers not exposed to SHS should be the control group over the complete study.

2. The results section of the abstract needs editing. It is not clear what control group is used

3. The difference in response to treatment between smokers and non-smokers exposed to SHS should be highlighted.

4. I suggest authors review our paper in Circulation (Barnoya and Glantz 2005) that describes how the effects of SHS on the cardiovascular system are nealy as large as smoking, despite the much lower dose.

5. Last paragraph of page 3, first sentence, it is not clear what EECP is for. Authors only mention "non-invasive treatment" for what? Complications? Costs (SHS exposed might incur in greater costs)?

6. Methods section. Patients were not selected randomly, authors need to address that issue.

7. Exposure to SHS was not assessed at work. This can be a major limitation lead to under-reporting and failing to find a larger effect. More background on patients would be useful (e.g. if they work and where, socioeconomic status).
8. The results section is not clear in citing the comparison groups, are there 2 or 3? They should be 3 as noted in comment #1.

9. Fist paragraph, page 6, second sentence, other factors that might influence completion rate need to be at least mentioned if not controlled for.

10. Discussion should emphasize the fact that the effects of SHS are acute and almost as large as those seen in active smokers.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.