Author's response to reviews

Title: Enhanced external counter pulsation in treatment of refractory angina pectoris: two year outcome and baseline factors associated with treatment failure

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor!

We have carefully tried to adjust our manuscript in accordance with the requests made by the reviewers.

The following major revisions have been made:

1) Missing data has been minimized. Most of the missing data was caused by patients from other counties, who received EECP therapy here, but failed to show up for annual follow up. Missing CCS class data has been extracted by careful revision of their medical records. Missing data regarding GTN usage was too extensive, we have therefore chosen only to present GTN usage before and immediately after EECP treatment.

2) Data in the results section is now mainly presented as ordinal data. Statistical calculations have been made by non-parametrical tests (ANOVA with post-hoc tests). We have chosen to present reduction in CCS class after treatment as mean +/- SEM as well, mainly since it is easy to comprehend. One might object to this, but it is a fairly common approach in biomedical literature.

3) The proportion of patients suffering from left ventricular heart failure is reported in "background characteristics". Left ventricular failure was not found to be associated with poorer EECP response.

4) Anti-diabetic agents are no longer reported as a factor associated with treatment failure.

5) The expression "risk for mass significance" has been explained somewhat more thoroughly in the "Limitations of the study" section.

6) Figure 2 has been replaced by a new set of charts which more accurately
describes response to therapy.

We hope the changes made to the manuscript have addressed most of the concerns pointed out by the reviewers.

Best regards,

André Erdling, MD