Author's response to reviews

Title: Small intestinal bacterial overgrowth in irritable bowel syndrome: are there any predictors?

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Author's response to reviews: see over
To
The Editor,
BMC Gastroenterology.

Re: Submission of revisions to MS: 8317536724676099- Small intestinal bacterial overgrowth in irritable bowel syndrome: are there any predictors?

We would like to thank you for reviewing our revision for the manuscript submitted to BMC Gastroenterology. First of all we would like to apologize for the delay in getting back to you with our responses and revisions. We appreciate your efforts and that of the reviewers in evaluating the manuscript. We would like to answer queries of the reviewer and editorial office comments as follows:

**Reviewer 2:**

This study lacks a control group and the criteria used for the GBT have not been validated. Hence, unless the authors can validate these criteria and provide a proper control group, these observations cannot be interpreted with any confidence. Referring to previous studies is not adequate because these studies suffer from the same major flaws.

**Response:** We agree with the reviewer that this is a weakness of this study, however given the study design, this shortcoming cannot be fixed. This aspect has been discussed in the manuscript.

**Reviewer 3:**

The authors have provided satisfactory answers to most of the comments. it remains unclear why so many patients were treated by opiates and if this factor affected the results. It would be useful to have at least a comment in the discussion about this point.

**Response:** We have commented regarding the high use of opiate analgesics in this study on Page 11, paragraph 2 of the manuscript.
We would like to thank you and the reviewers again for their input into our manuscript. We have tried to revise the manuscript by incorporating their suggestions and believe that this strengthened the manuscript and hope that the current version of the article is more acceptable. However if there is still thought to be any shortcomings in the article, we would be willing to make further revisions as felt appropriate by the Editor and reviewers.

Regards,

Savio C Reddymasu, MD
and
Richard W McCallum, MD