Author's response to reviews

Title: Multidisciplinary Approaches Vary as to the Role of Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) - Guided Fine Needle Aspiration: Controversial Indications

Authors: 

Jesse Lachter (J_Lachter@rambam.health.Gov.IL)  
Yoav Rosenthal (Yoav.Rosenthal@gmail.com)  
Yoram Kluger (Y_Kluger@rambam.health.Gov.IL)

Version: 4 Date: 3 July 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
July 2 2011
Cover letter amendment:
In addition to the cover letter sent to the editors, the below point-by-point response is made to the reviewer critiques. Every suggestion for modification by the reviewers was accepted and the appropriate revisions made, as can be seen in the track changes mode of the edited new version. The manuscript is now better, without having changed any of the essential content and points being made and its impact.
Thank you for the peer-review.
Jesse Lachter MD

Reviewer's report
Title: Multidisciplinary Approaches Vary as to the Role of Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) - Guided Fine Needle Aspiration: Controversial Indications
Version: 2 Date: 18 May 2011
Reviewer: Silvia Carrara
Reviewer's report:
This is a multidisciplinary research study that compares different specialistic approaches to the use of EUS-FNA for pancreatic and GI tract diseases. The Authors focused on some controversies regarding the indications for performing EUS-guided FNA and they proposed a 5 cases survey to oncologists, surgeons and gastroenterologists.
1) The questions are well posed and defined:
A) two questions are dedicated to pancreatic adenocarcinoma: 1) Is it necessary to obtain a tissue diagnosis of a pancreatic mass which appears operable and has malignant features according to a CT scan or EUS? 2) Should one order EUS-guided FNA of a CT-inoperable tumor, prior to initiating chemotherapy or radiation therapy?
B) two questions are dedicated to pancreatic cystic lesions: 3) How to approach an incidental finding of a pancreatic cyst in a woman with dyspepsia. 4) Regarding a stable pancreatic cyst, is periodic radiological follow-up sufficient, or is there a need for sampling the lesion for the existence of such indicators as CEA, amylase and lipase?
C) the last question is about an other controversial issue, the GI tract submucosal lesions: 5) when is EUS-guided FNA sampling of a submucosal GI tract lesion indicated?
2) The methods are appropriated and well described.
3) The data are well described too and summarized in clear tables, easy to read.
4) The manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition.
5) The discussion explains the results of the questionnaire but doesn’t refer to guidelines and previous papers on the use of EUS-guided FNA. The Author should discuss the data by comparing their results to previous studies. For example, in 2006, a working algorithm formed by international consensus, was crafted to begin standardizing the preoperative approach to pancreatic cystic tumors, the most controversial issue (Tanaka M, Chari S, Aadsay V, et al. International consensus guidelines for management of intraductal papillary...

The Author should extend the references and use other published studies to support their hypothesis in the discussion and in the conclusions.

The reviewer comment is fully accepted, and the amendments have been made which note the consensus attempts of the past in the discussion and in the references.

The Author should also objectify which kind of FNA-related risks would keep the physicians away from the decision to make an EUS-guided FNA.

This has been added appropriately

6) The limitations of the study are clearly stated.
7) The authors acknowledged any work upon which they were building.
8) I would change the title, as in my opinion it doesn’t attract the attention as it should, and it should be more easy to understand. I would propose something like: “a multidisciplinary survey on the controversies surrounding the use of EUS-guided FNA”.

The title has been modified accordingly

9) The writing would be acceptable after major compulsory revisions (see point 5 and 8).

The issues are very interesting and the survey should be proposed to an international panel of experts in order to obtain international multidisciplinary guidelines.

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.

Reviewer's report (Number 2)
Title: Multidisciplinary Approaches Vary as to the Role of Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) - Guided Fine Needle Aspiration: Controversial Indications
Version: 2 Date: 29 May 2011
Reviewer: Jose Celso Ardengh
Reviewer's report:
Comments on the paper entitled "Approaches Vary Among the Disciplines
Relevant to the Role of Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) - Guided Fine Needle Aspiration: Controversial Indications. " Lachter et al.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes but the introduction is long and confusing. I suggest the authors to decrease the text, making it more objective and convincing to the readers. Goals should be better addressed.

The goals have been clarified, and the instruction shortened to be more focused and objective.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
This section is clear but I think the proposal specified as doubtful cases shall be described in this section and not in the results section. The results should show only the results and not the description of each of the cases under discussion.

The section was moved from the results area as recommended by the reviewer.

3. Are the data sound?
Yes.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
This manuscript is interesting and demonstrates exactly the controversial clinical situations regarding the indication or not of EUS-FNA of our daily clinical practice.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
The discussion and conclusion are long and should be rewritten because at various points they generate confusion. At certain points the work is confusing and the writing is long, but this can be fixed easily.

The writing has been shortened and edited for clarity.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
The title is appropriate for the paper. The abstract is well formatted and expressed specifically what the paper show.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
I think the work should be published because the methodology of applied research is satisfactory.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.