Reviewer's report

Title: Altered cardiac rhythm in infants with bronchiolitis and respiratory syncytial virus infection

Version: 1 Date: 15 September 2010

Reviewer: Giuseppe Gerna

Reviewer's report:

The authors report a prospective study on the role of RSV in inducing alterations of the cardiac rhythm in infants with bronchiolitis and RSV infection. The authors report the presence of sinoatrial blocks in 26/34 (76.5%) RSV-positive patients and in 1/35 (2.9%) RSV-negative patients. However, these alterations are mild or moderate and consistently reversible.

The study is well conducted, clear in its purpose and conclusions. the English is acceptable.

Major compulsory revisions

1. In the definition of RSV or non-RSV bronchiolitis, there is no mention of other etiologic agents (bacterial or viral) which may have been associated with RSV or non-RSV bronchiolitis.

2. There is a correlation between high viral load in respiratory secretions and frequency of rhythm alterations. This issue deserves some comments, since the role of viral load in respiratory secretions is controversial and papers of other groups on this subject could be quoted.

A final additional concern of this review is the following: if no irreversible rhythm alteration have been found in two years in a group of 70 bronchiolitis, how it can be hypothesized that more severe and persistent cardiac alterations could be encountered in more severe respiratory infections?

Minor essential and discretionary revisions

None.

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.