Author's response to reviews

Title: Effects of resuscitation with crystalloid fluids on cardiac function in patients with severe sepsis

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Version: 3 Date: 3 March 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Hans Zauner,

Thank you for your email and the two reviewers' comments. We have answered the first reviewer’s comments one by one. Especially to his fourth question to require us to discuss the adverse effect of starch on kidney function, we changed the verb “believed” into “speculated” in the last sentence of the third paragraph of Discussion.

We then sent our manuscript to BMS for editing. They did it quickly and emailed the edited manuscript to us soon. We are sending you two copies of our manuscript.

We wish our paper be accepted and published in your journal as soon as possible. We also would like to buy the offprints.

Thank you, the reviewers and BMS for all the kindness!

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Guo Qing Yin
Reviewer’s report

Title: Effects of crystalloid fluids resuscitation on cardiac function in patients with severe sepsis

Version: 2 Date: 30 January 2008
Reviewer: Sean Bagshaw
Reviewers report:

Minor Essential Revisions

The introduction/discussion can still be shortened considerably and this may allow the authors to focus more on their central objective and the findings of their study.

A: Last time, we followed the reviewers advice and tried hard to delete all that was relatively less closely related to the objective of the present study. But this time, we feel very difficult to do any shortening because we have tried deleting some parts in the introduction or discussion and have resulted in confusion by our friends as readers. We have asked Manuscript Presentation Service to edit our manuscript and hope they will shorten the text by revising the English language.

The treatment of sepsis often involves numerous interventions - of which fluid therapy is one component. For greater context, the authors should consider adding reference to the study by Kumar et al (CCM 2006 Jun;34(6):1589-96) that showed that the duration of hypotension prior to receiving appropriate antibiotic therapy for patients with early septic shock was a critical determinant of survival - not the volume or type of fluid.

A: In the previous protocol for sepsis therapy, antibiotics were immediately applied at admission. Kumar et al compared the effect of antibiotics administered within 1 hour after admission with that administered within 6 hours. According to the previous studies, including Kumar et al’s study, all patients in the present study were administered by spectrum antibiotics at admission. However, the objective of the present study is investigating the effects of crystalloid fluid resuscitation, not the effect of antibiotic therapy. Therefore, we have not discussed antibiotic therapy in the introduction/discussion.

There are still grammatical/spelling errors.

A: The revision has been edited by a professional copyediting service.
The authors conclude that "colloidal solution prolonged the effectivity of hypertonic solution" however, the VISEP trial would suggest starches may have an adverse effect on kidney function - the authors may wish to qualify this statement.

A: In the present study, we did not investigate colloidal solution resuscitation, and we did not study the adverse effect on kidney function of starches, either. In the discussion of the present paper, the effectivity of hypertonic saline without colloidal solution on cardiac function was compared with that of hypertonic saline with colloidal solution in the previous papers. We could only speculate the effectivity of colloidal solution. Therefore, we have changed the sentence of the third paragraph of “Discussion” “We believe that colloidal solution prolonged the effectivity of hypertonic solution.” into “We speculate that colloidal solution prolonged the effectivity of hypertonic solution”.

To shorten the text, we have not evaluated the adverse effect of starches on kidney function because we think it is not related to the objective of the present study.

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
No competing interests.