Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of oral supplementation with a combination of beta-hydroxy-beta-methylbutyrate, arginine and glutamine on wound healing: A retrospective analysis of diabetic haemodialysis patients

Version: 4 Date: 22 October 2012

Reviewer: Tevfik Rifki Evrenkaya

Reviewer’s report:

Sir,

I read and evaluated the article mentioned above. According to your assessment criteria, my suggestions are as follows:

COMMENTS

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Yes, the question is well defined.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   I wonder if there is a discrepancy about the design of the work. Although, it is described as a “retrospective study”, the facts (the 4-week follow-up period, written informed consents and regular measurements of the wounds etc.) suggest that this is a “prospective study”. It seems that, the investigators made observation and follow-up instead of examining the existing clinical and laboratory records. Since there is an ethical approval supplied by the local ethical committee, there is no obstacle to change the description of the design of the study. This comment should be brought to the attention of the authors. The method of the study needs major compulsory revision.

3. Are the data sound? and

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Although the data are quite limited, the manuscript adheres the adequate standards for reporting and data deposition.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   Yes, both chapters are well balanced and convenient in terms of writing method.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Yes, the limitations are clearly stated in discussion part (the small sample size and retrospective design). But, it may be more suitable to state the limitations in the discussion chapter.
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes, they do. The references are mentioned in the manuscript.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes, they do.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
The writing needs minor essential revisions. There are several spelling mistakes and some language corrections are needed before being published. My comments and suggestions are as follows:

1) Page 3:
a. “Results” : In the first sentence, the “age average” should be replaced with “average age”. (Line 11)

2) Page 4:
a. Line 7 : The last part of the sentence (…… as the most frequent reasons of diabetic foot ulcers) is not an essential and it may be omitted.
b. Lines 10 and 11 : (…… patients have a negative effect …..) should be (….. patients have negative effects…..)
c. Line 14 : ( …. role in wound healings …) should be ( …. role in wound healing…..) (not plural, singular)

3) Page 5:
a. Line 1 : After a firm revision which will be done by authors, the method of the study may be a “nonretrospective” one. So the context of the first sentence ( The purpose of the retrospective ……….. ) may need some modification.

4) Page 6:
a. Line 19 : (Nine patients had been on….) should be used instead of (Nine patients received…..)

5) Page 7:
a. Line 11 : The part of the sentence ( …… even though the patients were treated with haemodialysis treatment due to chronic renal failure…) is unnecessary and it may be omitted.
b. Line 15 : The first sentence of the “Discussion” part is both long and meaningless. It is more reasonable to divide the sentence to two short and meaningful parts as follows: (Diabetes is one of the most frequent reasons of end-stage renal failure. Neuropathy, vasculopathy and ulcers ……….)
c. Line 19 : (….. that renal failure accompanies…..) should be (….. that renal failure accompanying…..)

Major Compulsory Revisions : The method of the study should be revised.
Minor Essential Revisions: The spelling mistakes mentioned above.

Prof Tevfik Rifki Evrenkaya

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests