Reviewer's report

**Title:** Pretreatment with statins improves early outcome in patients with first-ever ischaemic stroke: a pleiotropic effect of statins or a beneficial effect of hypercholesterolemia?

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 6 May 2010

**Reviewer:** Luca Mascitelli

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

The potential benefit role of hypercholesterolemia is not mentioned in the abstract's conclusions.

Furthermore, in the abstract’s results section, it should be mentioned that cholesterol levels were not measured in the study.

It should be mentioned that thrombolytic therapy was introduced in the authors' hospital after the collection of the studied patients. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize their results in a population of patients with stroke who undergo thrombolytic therapy. Consequently, it should be highlighted in the abstract, in the discussion, and in the conclusion that statin therapy may increase the risk of intracerebral haemorrhage, particularly in the setting of thrombolysis, an accepted and increasingly used therapy for stroke.

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

**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