Author's response to reviews

Title: Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy of normal appearing white matter in early relapsing-remitting MS. Disability-spectroscopy correlations.

Authors:

Dr Juan Luis JL Ruiz Pena . (jlruizpe@hotmail.com)
Pilar P Pinero . (havenot@hotmail.com)
Guillermo G Sellers . (havenot@hotmail.com)
Joaquin J Argente . (havenot@hotmail.com)
Antonio A Casado . (havenot@hotmail.com)
Jesus J Foronda . (havenot@hotmail.com)
Antonio A Ucles . (havenot@hotmail.com)
Guillermo G Izquierdo . (gizquierdo@supercable.es)

Version: 2 Date: 22 Apr 2004

Dear Dr Filippi,

We are really honored that you have read our work and we have tried to follow all your remarks to improve our article.

The goal of our study was to determine the axonal loss in normal appearing white matter and to correlate this with unusual disability scale as NRS, Ambulation index and MSFC.

The most important part of our study is that there is no correlation between this 3 scale and NAA / Cr, although there is correlation with EDSS. This is something not shown before.

Major compulsory revisions
1.- yes, EDSS 0 - 5.5 was an inclusion criteria. We have written this in the abstract.
2.- We have remove the 1st paragraph and have added a paragraph about pathological studies of NAWM. We have changed the order of the text, as you suggested, we have shortened the paragraph about NAA and we have found a better reference.
3.- We have shortened the objectives, removing the number and characteristics of the patients from this section.
4.- we have listed the scales and removed all the text you consider innecesary.
5.- We have removed the table 2 and changed table 1, but we think table 3 and 4 are necessary to understand the text and add new information we do not comment in the text.
6.- We have shortened the discussion and we have added a table to summarize all the information we comment in the discussion.

Minor compulsory revisions
We have followed all your remarks.

Best regards,

J L Ruiz Pena and G Izquierdo Ayuso
Dear Dr Federico,

We are really honored that you have read our work and we have tried to follow all your remarks to improve our article.

The goal of our study was to determine the axonal loss in normal appearing white matter and to correlate this with unusual disability scale as NRS, Ambulation index and MSFC.

The most important part of our study is that there is no correlation between this 3 scale and NAA / Cr, although there is correlation with EDSS. This is something not shown before.

Major compulsory revisions
1.- We have changed table 3 and 4 to express better what we want to say.
2.- Yes, this is part of a longitudinal study we are finishing this year, but we think the best is to remove all the corresponding text from the follow up in all the article and in one year we'll write about the result in the 1st and the 2nd year.
3.- We have worked with ratio and no with concentration; we have written this again.
4.- Because of the short duration of the disease (median 4 years) and the low lesional load in T2 of our patients it was impossible to choose large T2 weighted lesions or black holes without NAWM included in the VOI to minimise the partial volume effects. This is the reason why the mean NAA / Cr ratio of T2 Weighted Lesions or of black holes is close to the mean NAA / Cr ratio in NAWM.

Best regards,

J L Ruiz Pena and G Izquierdo Ayuso