Reviewer’s report

Title: The PALM Technique: histological findings of masked phototherapeutic keratectomy on rabbit corneas

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Reviewer: Jorge Alio

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Accept after discretionary revisions

The authors address in this manuscript the important topic of the potential biological interaction that the use of masking substances used in association to excimer laser ablation may have with the corneal wound healing process. In this original, the study of the corneal surface following excimer laser ablation with the PALM technique is specifically addressed.

The manuscript is well written and constructed. The following comments should be answered or taken into account by the authors in order to clarify some aspects of the study, which are not completely clear from the original:

1 - Introduction: - the authors should describe in two different sections the histopathological and the ultrastructural data obtained in the study. In the present form such data is mixed up and lacks systematic description. It would be most interesting to know the behaviour along the study of activated keratocytes in controls and problems eyes, their histopathological and ultrastructural aspect. Also, the aspect of the collagen lamellae in the corneal bed and whether pattern differences were evident between the two groups.
- tenascin and fibronectin staining were not used in the study. As they are among the best techniques to investigate corneal wound healing superficial process following excimer laser procedures, the authors should make a more complete description of the equivalent findings observed with the trichrome stain to follow in the discussion with the adequate comments concerning such previous studies.

2- Discussion: Please, complete as indicated above.

3- References: Reference 1 is misspelled.
Reference 7 - the Journal of reference is misspelled.
Ref. 12, 13, 16 and 27 are abstracts from congresses and should be included in the text and not in the reference list with peer-review articles.
Ref. 14, 15, 17, 18 and 27 should exclude the issue number in the reference.
Competing interests:

None declared.