Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparing the growth of preterm infants through the gestational period of 37 to 50 weeks with the reference fetus

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Version: 6 Date: 22 May 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
Validating the weight gain of preterm infants between the reference growth curve of the fetus and the term infant

We wish to thank both of the reviewers for their time and expertise.

The Editors asked us to respond to the following:

1. The authors need to expand on the Figure Legends and simplify Figs. 1-3.
   Response: Thank you for this suggestion. We have expanded the Figure legends to identify the meta-analysis as the bold curves, which we think will clarify them for the readers. Figures 1-3 are complex since they illustrate the variability of the infants' individual growth patterns.

2. Please include the suggestions from the 2nd reviewer in the manuscript regarding:
   "I hope the authors will include in the paper that there is no physiological basis for a reduction in weight gain from 37-40 weeks, and it is only the result of cross sectional data."
   Response: Thank you for this suggestion. We have added this concept.

Secondly, I see in this paper no arguments for the "smoothing "done in the Fenton curves. This should be deleted from the conclusions in the abstract.
   Response: Thank you for this suggestion. This has been removed.

Finally, giving both tables and figures is redundant." Hence, I would delete Tables 4-6 and keep the figures.
   Response: Thank you for this comment. The tables and figures are both relevant as they each provide results not repeated in the text, and we believe that the readers will want to see the basis for our comments. Thus we have elected to keep tables in our results, and disagree with the suggestion to delete them.

Respectfully submitted,

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