Author's response to reviews

Title: Retinopathy of prematurity and risk factors: a prospective cohort study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editorial Team:

We appreciate the reviewers’ suggestions and your advice. We revised the manuscript and have attached a point-by-point response to the reviewers' critique.

Yours sincerely

Padu Karna                                      Wilfried Karmaus
**Reviewer # Dr Coats**

**General**
I re-reviewed the material and I am satisfied with their responses. I think the paper is worthy of publication.

**Reviewer # Dr Good**

**General – Major compulsory revisions:**
Should state that the entry criteria in this study differ from other larger scale studies, so that the reader does not inadvertently compare these results to other studies.

**Minor compulsory revisions:**
Be careful to use standard numbers (Roman numerals) for zones; numbers for stage.

**Reviewer # Dr Miles**

**General – Major compulsory revisions:**
1. I am averse to the use of 3D charts, such as Figures 2 and 3. Any text on presentation of statistics will warn against there (e.g. The Visual Display of Quantitative Information, by Tufte, Common errors in statistics, by Goode, or Elements of Graph Design, by Kosslyn).
2. In the limitations section of the discussion, the authors should include a statement about the exploratory nature of the study, and the possibility of the results capitalizing on chance.

**Minor compulsory revisions:**
1. Page 7 “We than reduced”.
2. Page 8: “Late postnatal treatment with steroids posed”. I wouldn’t have said “posed” was the best word here.

We appreciate Dr Coats comment.

Page - 11, paragraph – 3, line – 4: We modified out statement to clarify the different entry criteria:

“Our entry criteria differs from current practice, which is to screen neonates with birth weights <=1250g or <=28 weeks of gestation based on the CRYO-ROP and LIGHT-ROP studies [33]. “

We appreciate this advice; we have changed greater than stage 2 ROP in our text and tables.

We followed the reviewer’s recommendation and modified the figures 2 and 3 from 3D to two-dimensional.

Page - 11, paragraph – 2, line – 10: We added the following statement to the limitation section:

“Also, at the beginning of our study, reports on the effects of PNS on ROP were contradictory [13-16]. This study was initiated to explore predictive factors for severe ROP, but not to test a priory hypotheses.”

We corrected to: “We then reduced..”

We corrected to: “Late postnatal treatment with steroids showed a 2.9-fold increased odds ratio”

We corrected this.
**Discretionary Revisions**

1. I would rather see a Cohen’s kappa (if possible) than simply saying that the examiners were in agreement in 99% of cases. (However, this is only in the response to the reviewers).

2. The authors write “To assess the relative risk of post-natal steroids in multivariate models, we decided to further condense the information on any application versus no application.” I don’t understand this argument.

3. The authors might consider putting p-values in the tables.

We choose to express it in percent agreement, since Cohen’s Kappa is not reliable because of missing observation in the two-by-two table.

Page - 6, paragraph – 2, line – 4: We change to the following:
“To assess the relative risk of PNS in multivariate models, we decided to dichotomize post-natal steroids use into any exposure versus no exposure.”

We choose not to provide p-values since the confidence limits provide include the identical information.