Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevalence of hearing loss induced by high sound pressure levels among people working with sound systems and general population in Brazil: a cross-sectional study.

Authors:

Regina P El Dib (re.lucci@terra.com.br)
Edina MK Silva (edinaksilva@terra.com.br)
Jose F Morais (jfmorais@pucsp.br)
Virginia FM Trevisani (vmoca@uol.com.br)

Version: 8 Date: 23 April 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prevalence of hearing loss induced by high sound pressure levels among people working with sound systems and general population in Brazil: a cross-sectional study.

MS: 6959209031564007
Research article

Authors:
Regina P El Dib re.lucci@terra.com.br
Edina MK Silva edinaksilva@terra.com.br
Jose F Morais jfmorais@pucsp.br
Virginia FM Trevisani vmoca@uol.com.br

Version 3: Date: 23th April, 2008

Author’s response to reviews: see over
Reviewer: Peter Rabinowitz

Minor Essential Revisions:

1) The authors should clarify their definition of NIHL,…but, does this means it was worse that the average of 5, 1, 2, and 8KHz? Or worse than only one of those frequencies?...

ANSWER: Yes, we addressed this point, please see it below in bold:

“The subjects were considered to present high frequency hearing loss consistent with noise exposure if their audiograms at the frequencies of 3000 and/or 4000 and/or 6000 Hz presented hearing thresholds that were at least 25 dB higher than the thresholds for the other tested frequencies (i.e. 250 Hz, 500 Hz, 1000 Hz, 2000 Hz and 8000 Hz), when this compromised hearing was observed in both the air test and the bone test, in one or both ears(4).”

2) I suggest that the authors use the term high frequency hearing loss consistent with noise exposure.

ANSWER: Yes, we used it. We also changes the title of the article to use this terminology suggested by the reviwer. Please, see some parts that we use the term below:

At the Title: “Prevalence of high frequency hearing loss consistent with noise exposure among people working with sound systems and general population in Brazil: a cross-sectional study”

At the abstract: “The aim here was to measure the prevalence of high frequency hearing loss consistent with noise exposure among sound technicians in Brazil and compare this with a control group without occupational noise exposure. “
At the abstract: “Conclusion: The sound technicians presented a higher prevalence of high frequency hearing loss consistent with noise exposure than did the general population, although the possibility of residual confounding due to unmeasured factors such as socioeconomic status cannot be ruled out.”

At the background: “High frequency of hearing loss consistent with noise exposure (noise-induced hearing loss, NIHL), excluding cases of acute acoustic trauma, is characterized by the gradual and progressive loss of hearing acuity. NIHL occupies the second place among the most common hearing illnesses, only surpassed by presbyacusis\(^{(1-2)}\).”

And so on…

3) Where sound pressures levels are referred to, the units should be dBA…

ANSWER: Done.

4) References need to be checked.

ANSWER: Done.

5) …In reference to this article, text now reads that “approximately 16% of the word’s…”

ANSWER: Done. Please, see the paragraph below:

“According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 16% of the world’s population endures NIHL caused by occupational exposure to noise\(^{(5)}\).”
Reviewer: Esko Matti Toppila

Minor Essential Revisions:

M1

Table 3. Variable is said to be….the later is corrected.

ANSWER: Done. Please, see it below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Sound technicians</th>
<th>Controls</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of hearing loss</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>N = 82</td>
<td>N = 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41 50.0%</td>
<td>85 89.5%</td>
<td>&lt;0.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>41 50.0%</td>
<td>10 10.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Chi-square test

M2

In the abstract

A statistically significance difference in hearing loss…..controls. Change to: A statistically significance difference in hearing loss was observed….the difference could be addressed…

ANSWER: Done. “A statistically significant difference in hearing loss was observed between the groups: 50% among the professionals and 10.5% among the controls. The difference could be addressed to high sound levels.”