Author's response to reviews

Title: The management of neuropathic ulcers of the foot in diabetes by Shock Wave Therapy

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

we thank you for the acceptance of the manuscript, "The management of neuropathic ulcers of the foot in diabetes by Shock Wave Therapy" to the publication on BMC Journals.

We read the Reviewers' comments:

**Minor Essential Revisions**
1) In figure four the ruler seems to cover up the lesion. Would it be possible to get another picture of the same patient with a better view of the healed wound?
2) Why did the authors choose specifically Silvercell among the many existing dressings?
3) If the authors wanted to assess the real efficacy of shockwave therapy would not it have been easier to choose a simple dressing instead of an advanced dressing that could have speed up the healing process?
4) Among the exclusion criteria the authors listed ulcers more than 5 cm wide. Was this a personal choice or was it because shockwave therapy results ineffective in these cases?

**Discretionary Revisions**
1) Does the 72 hours interval treatment belongs to existing international standards (if yes, which one did you choose to apply?) or did the authors choose it themselves (if yes, according to which criteria?).
2) It would be nice to include a picture of the instrument at work.

Based on your assessment of the validity of the manuscript, what do you advise should be the next step?
Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest**
An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English**
Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review**
No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests**
I declare that I have no competing interests

We made these following modifications.
**Minor Essential Revisions**
1) We are very sorry, but we haven’t another picture of the lesion in figure 4. We hope that it isn’t problem to the publish the article.
2) pag. 9, line -5: We decided to use specifically Silvercell among the many existing dressings because our Plastic Surgery Unit has experience in the management of the type of dressing.
3) pag.9, line 19-20: We chose to use the same dressing in the two groups to make them homogenous in all the steps of medical treatment with the only exception of the administration of the shock waves in the ESWT group, to avoid any possible bias among the two groups. We applied an advanced dressing
instead of an easier one, because we think that we should ensure the best care to the patients when it is possible. It is in according with the Hippocratic Oath that suggests to keep the good of the patient as the highest priority in ethical practice of medicine.

4) line 9, line 13: We excluded ulcers than 5 cm wide to have an homogenous population. We didn’t choose this exclusion criteria because shockwaves therapy results ineffective in these cases. In fact, in our clinical experience we treat ulcers of different dimensions and in great ulcers the rate of re-epithelisation is higher than one in the little ulcers.

Discretionary Revisions
1) Pag. 10, lines 17-23: We administrated the shockwaves every 72 hours for 3 sessions. We chose this protocol on the basis of our clinical experience in Orthopaedics treatment. Recently, the International Society for Medical Shockwaves Treatment published the “New guidelines for ESWT” and it suggests to apply from 1 to 6 sessions, using an interval of 1 week. However, in literature good results of angiogenesis are reported using different protocols in which the interval between each session of shock waves varies from 48 hours to two weeks. Following studies should be useful for compare the effects of protocols which are different only for the interval time between each treatment.
2) We include a picture of the instrument at work in the figure 5.
3) Pag. 10, line -3: The next steps could be to compare the effects of protocols which should be different only for the interval time between each treatment or for the dosage of shock waves.
4) We made some language corrections with the help of a translator.

We thank you for the pervious comments that give suggestions to improve our manuscript. Now we are completing this review process as we described in the previous paragraphs and we are waiting for your next answer.

Thanks,
All the Authors.