Reviewer's report

Title: Abdominal Wall Activity Is Necessary for Normal Female Rat Voiding

Version: 3 Date: 19 November 2006

Reviewer: Karl-Erik Andersson

Reviewer's report:

General
The manuscript is considerably improved, but I am not completely satisfied with the responses to my comments.

I still think that the title should be changed. This is not a matter of semantics but of common sense. To me what is “normal” in an anesthetized rat is not very interesting, and to refer only to anesthetized animals is to unnecessarily limit the validity of an interesting observation. If the title read: Is the Abdominal Wall Contraction A Necessary Component of Normal Voiding in Female Rats?, the answers from the study is most probably “yes”, because the VAR is found in both anesthetized and conscious rats. It is clear from the present data that VAR is not necessary for voiding in the anesthetized rat (an average decrease in voiding volume from 1.8 to 1.1 ml and in average flow from 0.10 to 0.9 ml/sec, is not very impressive even if the differences are statistically significant). Whether or not VAR is necessary for normal voiding and flow can only be established in conscious, freely moving animals and should be investigated. What is found in the anesthetized rat is not necessarily found in conscious animals. It may very well be that the conscious animal can compensate for the absence of abdominal wall contraction. Furthermore, it can be established whether or not VAR is necessary for initiation of voiding or whether it significantly contributes to keep the bladder pressurized during urine flow.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'