Author’s response to reviews

Title: A double-blind, randomized controlled, prospective trial assessing the effectiveness of oral corticoids in the treatment of symptomatic lumbar stenosis

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Editorial requests:

1) Please include a competing interests section at the end of the manuscript, before the reference list. If the authors have no competing interests, please state: "The authors declare that they have no competing interests."

**ANSWER:** we include a competing interest statement at the end of the manuscript.

2) If applicable, please include an acknowledgement section at the end of the manuscript before the reference list. Please acknowledge anyone who contributed towards the study by making substantial contributions to conception, design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, or who was involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content, but who does not meet the criteria for authorship. Please also include the source(s) of funding for all authors. Authors should obtain permission to acknowledge from all those mentioned in the Acknowledgements. Please state clearly whether or not you have funding in the acknowledgement section. If there is no funding, please state this.

**ANSWER:** we do not have acknowledgements to do and have not funding. We include a statement regarding funding at the end of the manuscript.

3) Please include an Authors Contributions section at the end of the manuscript, before the reference list. Each author should be listed individually. We suggest the following kind of format (please use initials to refer to each author's contribution): AB carried out the molecular genetic studies, participated in the sequence alignment and drafted the manuscript. JY carried out the immunoassays. MT participated in the
sequence alignment. ES participated in the design of the study and performed the statistical analysis. FG conceived of the study, and participated in its design and coordination and helped to draft the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**ANSWER:** we include a Authors Contributions section at the end of the manuscript.

**ANSWER TO REVIEWERS**

**Title:** A double-blind, randomized controlled, prospective trial assessing the effectiveness of oral corticoids in the treatment of symptomatic lumbar stenosis

**Version:** 4Date:3 June 2014

**Reviewer:** Tetsuryu Mitsuyama

**Reviewer's report:**

In abstract, P#0.05 is unnecessary. (P2L21)

**ANSWER:** we delete the p value in abstract

It is better to be consistent in “lumbar canal stenosis”, instead of “spinal stenosis”

**ANSWER:** we agreed with the reviewer and changed “spinal stenosis” to “lumbar canal stenosis”.

The authors should show the results and tables of followings that they mentioned in key points and conclusion.

1. There is no relation between the diameter of the vertebral canal and the patients’ pain and limitation.
No direct correlation between the degree of stenosis on MRI and symptom severity or quality of life as revealed by the Roland–Morris Questionnaire and SF-36. Lumbar stenosis at L4/L5 is more symptomatic compared with stenosis at the other evaluated levels.

2. Obese patients with canal stenosis are more symptomatic than thin patients. BMI was directly associated with the degree of limitation and inversely associated with quality of life.

ANSWER – We tried to sow the results and tables follow the same sequence of keypoints and conclusion, please see revised text.

“{1.5 [EN]}” and “{3.4 [EN]}” are unintelligible. (P5L7-8, PL)

ANSWER: we delete this information and reformulate the paragraph.

How about “by 3.14 as pi”? (P5L9)

ANSWER – We are only showing the π value. We delete this information since this value is common sense.

(MLGs) is unnecessary. Is it GLM? (P5L18)

ANSWER – Yes it is GLM. We delete the acronym.

What are “modest differences”? (P7L3)

ANSWER – We change it to small differences.

What are “different instruments”? (P7L10-11)

ANSWER – we think this paragraph is too confused, so we decided to delete it.
It is better to show the correlation between BMI and RM-Q in result and table.

(P7L13)

ANSWER – we include it in the results section.

The paragraph of spondylolisthesis in discussion seems to be unnecessary. (P9L3-11)

ANSWER – We agree with the reviewer and delete the paragraph.

It is better show a discussion about the reason why oral corticoid was not effective, although local corticoid was effective. It is difficult to conclude that the inflammation is not important for symptom from this study.

ANSWER – we include this discussion in the text.

In table 1, median values and standard errors are unnecessary. Numbers of significant figures in multiplication and average are equals to least numbers of diameters.

ANSWER – we delete the median and standard errors in Table 1. Unfortunately we do not understand the second part of reviewer answer. Can you please elucidate it for us?

In table 2 and 3, graphs are much more comprehensible. The author should pay more attentions to significant digits.

ANSWER – We decided to keep the tables and do not add graphs and changed table title.
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being Published

**ANSWER – The paper was revised by a native English professor.**

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**ANSWER – We believe our statistic is done correctly, since it was done by a statistician with extensive experience in this type of study design.**