Reviewer's report

Title: Tinnitus in elderly patients and prognosis of mild-to-moderate congestive heart failure: a cross-sectional study with a long-term extension of the clinical follow-up

Version: 3 Date: 21 March 2011

Reviewer: Berthold Langguth

Reviewer's report:

My comments one and three have been adequately addressed. But I still have clear objections against the interpretation of the results.

major compulsory revisions

1. The authors interprete the observed correlation between tinnitus and severity of congestive heart failure in the sense of a causal relationship. However this conclusion is not supported by the data

2. The interpretation of a tinnitus as a consequence of disturbed microcirculation of the inner ear stands in contrast to the current pathophysiological knowledge about tinnitus. The authors ignore in their introduction all recent knowledge about the mechanisms of tinnitus generation.

3. The authors do not provide an explanation how the proposed mechanism (microcircular dysfunction of the inner ear) may generate tinnitus without having an influence on auditory thresholds.

These issues have to be addressed both in the introduction and the discussion section, before publication of the manuscript can be recommended.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I HAVE NO COMPETING INTERESTS