Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prospective Randomized, Double-blind, and Placebo-controlled Clinical Trial with Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) in Patients with Inflammatory and Erosive Osteoarthritis (OA) of the Hands (Acronym: OA TREAT)

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear editors,

Thank you for reviewing our revised manuscript and thank you for the valuable question:

‘In the statement “In the unlikely case that in the verum arm the dosages are more frequently increased by 50% or more (including an increase from 0 mg to half of the full dosage) this finding will be taken into account in the interpretation of the results.” Do the authors mean “In the unlikely case that in the placebo arm”’

Answer: We do indeed mean the verum arm. If in the verum arm the dosage of NSAID is increased this would mean that verum would actually be inferior to placebo, but due to higher NSAID intake patients may give a lower pain rating, which could lead to a false positive result. We therefore changed the sentence as follows:

“In the unlikely case that in the verum arm the dosages are more frequently increased by 50% or more (including an increase from 0 mg to half of the full dosage) this observation will be taken into account in the interpretation of the findings TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF A FALSE POSITIVE RESULT.”

We hope that the statement is more clear now, and we hope that you will find this revised manuscript acceptable for publication in Trials.

Kind regards

P. Klaus on behalf of Dr. J. Detert et al.