Author's response to reviews

Title: PEEP-ZEEP technique: Cardiorespiratory repercussions in mechanically ventilated patients submitted to a coronary artery bypass graft surgery.

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PEEP-ZEEP technique: Cardiorespiratory repercussions in mechanically ventilated patients submitted to a coronary artery bypass graft surgery.

Answer to the reviewer:
The authors would like to thank Dr. Issa for his review. Changes were made in red along the text.

Major compulsory revisions

The main limitation of the study is the small number of patients study; a negative result in this setting should not be regarded as an evidence for absence of difference. As the study primary objective was to evaluate safety issues, the small number of patients limits the conclusions. The authors should comment how the number of patients was estimated.

Answer: the authors agree with the reviewer and this information was added in the study limitation. “This study is limited by the number of patients and by the fact that they did not show a great amount of secretion on respiratory system.”

We took a previous study as a reference to estimate the amount of patients enrolled in this study (Comparison of the effectiveness of manual and ventilator hyperinflation at different levels of positive end-expiratory pressure in artificially ventilated and intubated intensive care patients. Savian C, Paratz J, Davies A. Heart Lung. 2006;35:334-41.)

Minor essential revisions
Additional baseline clinical data should be added to table 1, such as hemoglobin level, left ventricular ejection fraction, and presence of co-morbidities such as COPD, hypertension and diabetes mellitus.

Answer: Post-operative hemoglobin and hematocrit levels were added in table 1. Patients with COPD (and any pulmonary diseases) were not included in this study.

The aim of this study was to evaluate the PEEP-ZEEP maneuver after cardiac surgery. All patients, to be included, must have hemodynamic stability and normal levels of blood pressure, so we did not collect any information about previous co-morbidities like hypertension and diabetes.