Reviewer's report

Title: At a distance preconditioning in normal and hypertrophic rat hearts

Version: 3 Date: 26 January 2011

Reviewer: Wolfgang Witt

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Minor Essential Revisions

1. The term "preconditioning at a distance" is somehow misleading. It should be replaced by one of the standard terms systemic preconditioning or remote preconditioning. A brief definition should be given in Background including difference between remote effects in the same organ and a distant organ. A further discussion is not necessary since these terms have been used in countless papers and reviews. Abbreviations should be used.

2. Presentations of results and discussions in Methods should be avoided (p. 5, 2nd paragraph; p. 7, 1st paragraph).

3. Figures and tables should be adapted to the style of the Journal. Error bars should be included in the Figures whenever possible, and significance should be indicated by appropriate symbols.

4. Abstract, line 10:
   Please specify: which limb? Both hind limbs? Duration?

5. Abstract, line 12:
   ..reperfusion for 60 min...

6. Page 5, Experimental Protocol:
   How and where precisely was the A. femoralis occluded? Were both hindlimbs ischemic?

7. Figure 1:
   I can't see the heart in my printout. The figure doesn't give much additional information. It can be omitted.

8. Page 7, line 9:
   What means "...committed to paper..."?

9. Table 2:
   The table can be omitted. The data of Table 1 are largely repeated, and no additional information is given except that the animals were equally distributed among groups.
10. Table 4:
The baseline data are also presented in Figures 2-4. If error bars and significances are included in the Figures, Table 4 can be omitted.

11. Page 8, line 4:
What means "LVPP was limited"?

12. Page 8, line 6:
(necrosis): Only functional impairment was detected.

13. Page 8, 2nd paragraph:
What means comparable? Are there significant differences at each time point?

14. Page 9, 2nd paragraph:
Are there any reasons for the lack of effects of systemic preconditioning in the present investigation whereas many other studies showed a positive outcome?

15. Page 10, 2nd paragraph:
The positive effect of remote preconditioning in the hypertrophic heart as opposed to the normal heart is the remarkable and unexpected result of this investigation. I miss a discussion of this effect in respect to potential underlying mechanisms etc.

16. Page 10, 2nd paragraph, bottom:
What means "unlikeness among the results"?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests