Author's response to reviews

Title: Paracetamol serum concentrations in preterm infants treated with paracetamol intravenously: a case series of nine.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
To the Editor-in-Chief

Journal of Medical Case Reports
Professor Michael Kidd

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Concerning the Manuscript “Paracetamol serum concentrations in preterm infants treated with paracetamol intravenously: a case series of nine”.

Dear editor,

We would be grateful if you would consider our revised manuscript for publication. In this letter you will find a point-by-point response to the comments made by the reviewers.

1. The authors should further stress that the doses administered were 'original', off label and also 'off-practice', and likely due to a miscalculation (no conversion from propacetamol to paracetamol)

Response: our doses were not due to miscalculation. We formulated this in the discussion section: "We accidentally administered i.v. paracetamol in a dose not supported by literature. The dose we used in preterm infants of less than 32 weeks gestation is being used in term infants, and is not a result of miscalculation due to the differences in formulations of propacetamol and paracetamol”.

2. Please also check the ‘loading’ dose and maintenance doses, since is strongly depends on the compound used. In its current form, the 3rd line of the discussion is not in line with what we have described and administered.

Response: we checked and adjusted the doses according to the referred article.

3. The authors should also integrate the reported problems with inadvertent dose administration of iv paracetamol (as communicated by the manufacturer).

Response: we contacted the manufacturer and incorporated their response in our discussion section

On May 15th we received a further email with 2 remarks, made by the Deputy Editor. In the newly revised manuscript (version 3) we responded to these further remarks:

1) In the Discussion section, the authors write: "We accidentally administered i.v. paracetamol in a dose not supported by literature."

I felt that the authors were being to harsh on themselves. Their actions were not an accident but more a deliberate attempt to control pain using medication in an 'off-license' manner when no national evidence based and/or consensus guidance was available. So please would they consider revising this one sentence.

Response: we deleted the word “accidentally”.

2) In the Acknowledgements and Funding section the authors write:
"We would like to thank the parents of the infants who participated in our study for their consent. We would also like to state that our study was not funded in any way."

Was this case series part of a study? If so this should be made clear in the manuscript, as my impression from the manuscript (see Introduction) was that the collection of blood levels was not conducted as part of a formal study but more for safety reasons.

Response: we changed the acknowledgment section and stated that we “would like to thank the parents for their consent to publish the data”.

All changes are highlighted in the main manuscript.

Concerning the remark by one of the reviewers that our English was not suitable for publication we invited a native speaker to revise the manuscript. The only remark the native speaker had concerned omitting the word “at” from the last sentence.

We are looking forward to read your comment or decision on our manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

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