Author’s response to reviews

Title: Clinical Attributes for the Conservative Gait Pattern in Diabetes

Authors:

    James S Wrobel (james.wrobel@rosalindfranklin.edu)
    Ryan T Crews (ryan.crews@rosalindfranklin.edu)
    John E Connolly (john.connolly@va.gov)

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Menz:

Thank you for forwarding the reviewers’ second round of critiques and permitting us to respond. We will address the reviewers’ concerns sequentially.

Dr. Raspovic:
1. “Articulating the reliability issue more clearly.” I have tried various means at accessing and opening the corrupt file for a second time. Dr. Connolly also meticulously searched the paper files from this project. Unfortunately, we were not able to re-create a usable data set. We have added the following sentence to the limitations section: While our inter-rater reliability of this measure was moderate, other authors have described mean absolute differences of two degrees.[1]"

2. “Clarify ankle measurement” Thank you. We have carefully searched the paper to insert ankle dorsiflexion v. ROM.

3. “Clinical implications are premature…unestablished interventions” Thank you for this important critique. We would respectively disagree due to a few exercise interventional studies albeit small, that have suggested improved gait stability.[2-6]

Dr. Rao’s minor revisions:
1. “Not enough evidence to support this statement.” We have removed this sentence.

2. “Please remove the sentence about fall risk.” We are not sure what sentence Dr. Rao is referring to. We have an entire paragraph devoted to fall risk. We believe it may motivate the clinical importance of a conservative gait strategy in the context of potential fall risk. Please advise if the entire paragraph is suggested to be removed.

3. “Include walking speed in the model” Initially, we were hesitant to include this in the model as it appeared to not meet the definition of a covariate where it would be related to both the exposure and disease and not be in the causal pathway. We believed it to be in the causal pathway. However, in reflecting on our definition of a propulsive gait, walking speed is not in the definition. Dr. Rao is also correct that the addition of walking speed clearly improved the precision of the estimates.

4. “Eliminate sentence…dramatic need for fall risk detection.” We have removed this sentence.

5. Discussion has lost coherence. We have rearranged the paragraphs at Dr. Rao’s suggestion.

We appreciate Dr. Raspovic and Rao thorough critiques. Addressing their concerns has improved the quality and clarity of the paper. Thank you again for your consideration.

Best regards,
Jim
References