Author's response to reviews

Title: The Effectiveness of Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Agents in the treatment of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease: A Systematic Review

Authors:

Divya Dhasmana (divya.dhasmana@nhs.net)
Emma Hathorn (emma.hathorn@uhb.nhs.uk)
Rachael McGrath (rjm76@student.le.ac.uk)
Anjum Tariq (anntariq@hotmail.com)
Jonathan DC Ross (jonathan.ross@uhb.nhs.uk)

Version: 3
Date: 5 May 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Re: Revised submission

The Effectiveness of Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Agents in the treatment of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease: A Systematic Review

I would be grateful if you would consider submission of a revised manuscript. I have attached our comments below.

Reviewers comments and authors response:

Lisbeth Nilas:

The manuscript tries to perform a Systematic review of the effectiveness of NSAID’s in the treatment of PID, complies with the Prisma Guidelines, and is altogether a methodologically well-performed systematic review. The study outcome is clear: short and long-term clinical effectiveness of supplementary NSAID’s in women with PID. The literature retrieval is through and nicely described, and the search strategy is logical, appropriate and well-performed. The text is easily read, although the introduction seems a bit long. As only two minor low quality RCT’s from 1989 and 1991 with 49 and 52 participants, respectively, were identified, both with a follow-up of only 9-11 weeks, the lack of evidence precludes any conclusion about the possible adverse or beneficial effects of NSAID. The methodological issues are discussed appropriately and the findings interpreted professionally.

The main drawback of the Systematic review is the lack of appropriate literature.

Authors’ response:

Both reviewers argue the same point which is the paucity of relevant literature identified by the review. Pelvic inflammatory disease is a common clinical condition with significant associated morbidity, and animal data suggest inflammation is central to the pathogenesis. The authors maintain that the question is an important one, and the limited results should not prejudice the process of enquiry. The purpose of the systematic review was to identify the relevant literature and the volume of this could not be known until the process was complete. Both reviewers agree that it is a well-performed review, and one has commented that it is an interesting topic.

A systematic review can be very helpful when several studies find varying effects of an intervention. The impact and the relevance of Systemic reviews are limited when there are no relevant studies to review. The theory that a host reaction has a central role in the development of adverse reproductive consequences of PID is interesting, but is only a theory. One could
also argue that the host reaction has a central role in limiting spread of the disease and fear the NSAID’s could postpone cure. However, the experimental animal studies indicating reduced adhesions in traumatic lesions after NSAID treatment, justify interest in possible human effects of these drugs. Overall, I find the review of limited interest, but it is not possible to suggest improvements, as the main limitation is the lack of literature.

Jan Blaakaer:

I do think it is an interesting topic and a good performed systematic review. *Unfortunately, two publications of low standard including 82 patients are too little for publication as a review!*

Authors’ response:
Please see comment above.

I look forward to your reply.

Kind regards,

Divya Dhasmana
E Hathorn
R McGrath
J Ross
A Tariq