Author’s response to reviews

Title: Comparison of surgical field visibility during propofol or desflurane anesthesia for middle ear microsurgery

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editors,

We read carefully the comment from the reviewers. We made the point to point revision according to the comments from you and the reviewers. We highlight the changes in red.

David M. Polaner (Reviewer 1)

1. While you have addressed my comment regarding the clinical (rather than statistical) significance of the difference between the two groups in the discussion, I believe that such a tempering of the implication of the difference should be included in the initial statement of the findings (first sentence in the discussion) and perhaps in the abstract as well.

Answer: We revised the Conclusion Section “In summary, although there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the surgical field visibility according to the Boezzaart grading scale, when remifentanil is used in combination with desflurane, similar operative conditions can be achieved for middle ear surgery.”

Accordingly, the first sentence in the Discussion Section is revised as “We found that the average surgical field visibility score was <2 for both groups while the patients in propofol/remifentanil (PR) anesthesia group had lower surgical field visibility scores than those in desflurane/remifentanil (DR) anesthesia group during middle ear surgery.”
The Abstract part as “Although PR anesthesia resulted in lower surgical field visibility scores than DR anesthesia, DR provided acceptable operative conditions as well, albeit more remifentanil consumption was noted in the DR group.”

Smita Prakash (Reviewer 3)

1. The authors have changed the effect-site concentration for remifentanil without highlighting the change. In the previous manuscript the effect site concentration for remifentanil was different in the two groups. "Effect site concentration was 2-6 μg/ml for both propofol and remifentanil. For patients in the DR group, anesthesia was maintained with 4-8% desflurane and an effect site concentration of 2-4 μg/ml remifentanil."

The changed version now reads as "The effect site concentration of remifentanil was 1-8 ng/ml for both groups." This alteration in methodology is not appropriate.

Answer: We checked and corrected the methods Section. We now highlight the changes.

2. Conclusion: The two sentences of the conclusion are at variance with each other. The first sentence states that PR is superior to DR. The second sentence says that DR provides similar field as PR. Please rewrite the conclusion.

Answer: We rewrite the conclusion as “In summary, although there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the surgical field visibility according to the Boezaart grading scale, when remifentanil is used in combination with desflurane, similar operative conditions can be achieved for middle ear surgery”. Please see the Conclusion Section.

3. Table 2 is in duplicate.

Answer: We delete the Table.
4. In Mean blood pressure figure, one P value = 0.125 refers to which time-point? It would be best to write P > 0.05 in the legend of the figure if all Ps are > 0.05 rather than one P value which is insignificant.

Answer: We revise the P value, please see the MAP figure.