Author’s response to reviews

Title: A 95 year-old suffering circulatory arrest after accidental hypothermia: a case report

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Author’s response to reviews:

Firstly we would like to thank you for your thoroughness in reviewing our case report. The comments and suggestions on how to improve our article are highly appreciated. In the following we comment on your remarks point by point:

Reviewer 1 (S Tisherman)

We agree with the general comments of the reviewer. Going through literature one finds few publications concerned with resuscitation with the use of ECMO/CPB in the elderly. In our opinion the main take away message in this case report is the successful resuscitation of an extremely elderly patient. In retrospect we have discussed the case, both internally in our clinic, but also with colleagues in other institutions, and many admit they would be reluctant to start extracorporeal resuscitation on this patient based on his age alone. The circumstances in this very case (witnessed circulatory arrest, immediate CPR, good quality CPR, duration of cardiac arrest until ECR and a low serum potassium level) are of course very favorable. Displaying the excellent outcome of this patient we are hoping to contribute to the education of the entire rescue chain when it comes to decision making in the handling of similar patients. Recognizing high age as not being an exclusion criterion for extracorporeal CPR is in our opinion important, especially for colleagues in pre-hospital services (continuation of high-quality CPR, swift transportation to a center capable of extracorporeal resuscitation, and so on…).

Specific comments:

- Page 4, last para: The term “uneasy” is replaced by “restless”, which we think is a more concise, less “norwenglish” term.
- Page 5, last para: “costa” is replaced by “rib”, “habitual” is replaced by “baseline”.
- Discussion: “it’s not clear what a 2% survival…etc.” We agree, and we have therefore stated that the pathophysiology in a hypothermic cardiac arrest is different from “normal” cardiac arrests.

Reviewer 2 (JA Elefteriades)

We have now (on page 5, first para, line 4-5) included general criteria for attempting EC resuscitation in accidental hypothermia. Favorable factors in this case (which lead to the clinical decision to start ECR) are stated under “Discussion and Conclusion”, first para.