Author's response to reviews

Title: One-year follow-up of patients with long-lasting post-herpetic neuralgia.

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Version: 4 Date: 4 September 2014

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

Thank you for your mail of the past August 18, 2014 and for the further comments of the peer-review. Please, find enclosed the new version of our manuscript together with the point-by-point response to the comments raised by the Reviewer.

Looking forward to hearing from you at your earliest possible convenience, we thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Antonio Volpi

Reviewer's report

Title: One-year follow-up of patients with long-lasting post-herpetic neuralgia.
Version: 3
Date: 8 August 2014
Reviewer: Marius Birlea

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions:

An important observation remains: the statement in the abstract Conclusions that "Antiviral therapy used within 72 hours from the rash onset reduces the risk of higher VAS in the follow up" needs to be more carefully addressed, to avoid looking speculative. Estimation of “natural history” regarding the pain can be made if no treatments for pain were administered in the 6 months before the enrollment in the study or during the 12 months of study. In their response, the authors agree that the treatment given by the Pain clinic is responsible by the reduction of VAS at all time points, meaning that the natural history was altered. If it is mentioned in the manuscript that there was no significant difference in the treatment given to the patients (other than antivirals at the time of rash), than it probably can be said that the initial antiviral treatment had an impact on the pain at time 0 (T0). During the 12 months study period, there was a continuous improvement of symptoms in most patients and remains difficult to explain a correlation of the antiviral treatment at the time of rash with decrease of pain at T6 but not at T3 or T12. In the Discussion section of revised Manuscript, the authors correctly state that a potential explanation can be the variability of clinical response.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests: ‘I declare that I have no competing interests’

Authors’ answer

Thank you very much for your comments. We agree with you on this point and have revised the manuscript according to your suggestion. You’ll find the changes in the new text according to the following list:

Abstract: page 2, lines 12 and 20

Results: page 8, 5th paragraph

Discussion: page 13, lines 17-20