Author’s response to reviews

Title: Height, weight and body mass index of children with congenital cataracts before surgical treatment

Authors:
Jingjing Chen (34728424@qq.com)
Duoru Lin (773234730@qq.com)
Zhuoling Lin (247299831@qq.com)
Xiaoyan Li (1083636873@qq.com)
Qianzhong Cao (289793645@qq.com)
Zhenzhen Liu (liu_zhenzhen@qq.com)
Erping Long (longerping@qq.com)
Xiaohang Wu (1034281949@qq.com)
Li Zhang (254843236@qq.com)
Xiaojia Zhou (5745809@qq.com)
Lisha Wang (526490589@qq.com)
Jing Li (369482406@qq.com)
Jun Fu (fujun9235@163.com)
Haotian Lin (haot.lin@hotmail.com)
Weirong Chen (chenwr_q@aliyun.com)
Yizhi Liu (yizhi_liu@aliyun.com)

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Author’s response to reviews:
Alja Crnej
Dear Alja Crnej,

We would like to thank you and the reviewers for your constructive comments regarding our paper entitled “Height, weight and body mass index of children with congenital cataracts before surgical treatment” BOPH-D-17-00116. We are pleased to see that all reviewers recognize the clinical significance of our paper. They also raised some significant issues regarding our manuscript. We have taken these constructive criticisms seriously and have made a major commitment to address the concerns of the reviewers. We have addressed the comments of the reviewers on a point-by-point basis below.

We again wish to thank you and the reviewers for your helpful comments.

Sincerely,

Weirong Chen

Editor Comments:

Excellent paper! Please answer to the comments of the reviewers below.

Response: We really appreciate for your positive comment!

Reviewer reports:

Ilana B. Friedman (Reviewer 1): I congratulate the authors on their submitted manuscript. The design of the study was well thought out and it appears that they made a good effort to get as complete a data set as possible. The information is topical to readers with an interest in pediatric cataract. However there are a number of limitations. The conclusions drawn about the patients with familial cataracts seem to have lower socioeconomic and educational leveled that may be thought to contribute to their lower BMI and growth, however, short of discussing some of the possible reasons in the absence of systemic illness, perhaps the data could be reviewed and controlled for the above factors compared to the cataract patients without familial heredity. In addition, how do these patients compare to age matched controls in their populations as the WHO criteria may not be directly applicable to their geographic and ethnic area. This would make their data more powerful.

Overall, the paper is fairly well written and I commend the authors on their English facility and editorial efforts. It made the paper easy for the reader to understand.

Response: Thank you so much for your recognition and constructive comments!
Actually, when compared the familial cataracts with those without familial heredity, patients complicated with systemic illness were all carefully excluded in the analysis. Namely, the systemic illness was also controlled in this study besides age and gender matched. Based on your kind suggestion, we have added these statements clearly in the revised manuscript (Line 155&160).

In addition, to some extent, the WHO criteria may be the best and the most authoritative data of child growth standards at present. With respect to the geographic and ethnic questions you mentioned, the total sample size for the development of the WHO criteria was 8440 children from 6 countries all over the world, including Brazil (developing country, the largest country in South America), Ghana (relatively developed country, located in Africa), India (the world's second most populous country, one of the fastest growing economies, located in Asia), Norway (a highly-developed country in Northern Europe), Oman (Arabs, located in Western Asia), and USA (developed country, located in North America). (more information please refer to http://www.who.int/childgrowth/standards/technical_report/en/). By averaging the children with different geographic and ethnic area, the WHO criteria may provide a reference for the physical growth of children from all over the world. Admittedly, comparisons performed in the same race maybe more powerful, we will include this consideration in our post-study based on the findings of the current study. Thank you for your helpful suggestions again!

Sava Barisic, PhD (Reviewer 2): No comments.

Response: Thank you for reviewing our manuscript.