Author’s response to reviews

Title: Comparison of Intraocular Pressure as Measured by Three Different Non-contact Tonometers and Goldmann Applanation Tonometer for Non-glaucomatous Subjects

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your kind letter.

We now send you the 4th revised version of our manuscript. We hope that we have adequately answered your comments and questions, and that you will be satisfied with the result. We hope that it is now suitable for publication in BMC Ophthalmology.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Enclosure: Response to editor’s comments
One copy of the revised manuscript
One copy of completed IRB approval

With best regards,
Yours sincerely,
Yu Cheol Kim
1) Below we will fully detail the definition of a Prospective vs. a Retrospective study:

Prospective

A prospective study watches for outcomes, such as the development of a disease, during the study period and relates this to other factors such as suspected risk or protection factor(s). The study usually involves taking a cohort of subjects and watching them over a long period. In essence a prospective study is a type of study that follows participants for a particular future time period, deciding to do so prior to the recruitment of participants. Data can be generated for the express purpose of informing a Prospective study.

Retrospective

A retrospective study looks backwards and examines exposures to suspected risk or protection factors in relation to an outcome that is established at the start of the study. Generally, a retrospective study will look back at events that took place in an effort to retroactively examine data. In the case of Retrospective studies, data from participants would be generated prior to the conception of the study either through routine medical care or by other studies. Data is never generated for the express purpose of informing a Retrospective study.

With this in mind, please clearly state once more whether this study was retrospective or prospective.

-> We express our sincere appreciation to you for the opportunity to revise our manuscript. We once have had an opportunity to demonstrate three different non-contact tonometers (NCTs) for 10 days to decide a new one. During the period we were able to evaluate three different kinds of NCTs. At that time, we did not know which one would be purchased but we needed the IOP values measured with the same kind of NCT that would be purchased soon and used for many years in the future, because the evaluation of the serial IOP changes measured with the same NCT was believed to be important clinically. That is why we checked the IOP with different
kinds of NCTs at the same time. We thoroughly explained the purpose of these measurements, and we performed those measurements only if we obtained verbal agreement from the patient.

Although some aspects of the study could be misunderstood as prospective design, the measurement of the IOP with 3 different NCTs was performed in a clinical process not a research process.

We recognized that these measurements obtained during the clinical course are quite valuable. We therefore decided to perform this study. However, we were only able to obtain three NCTs during the demonstration period of 10 days. We ultimately had to perform this study on the basis of these measurements and obtain IRB approval in a retrospective way. We appreciate your kind comment. We have changed the following sentences in the Ethics approval and consent to participate [Page 13, Lines 11 to 13] of the revised manuscript:

“This was a retrospective study; therefore, informed written informed consent could not be obtained from the patients. Nevertheless, all patient data were anonymized. Moreover, verbal informed consent was obtained from all patients before examination.”

2) Please clarify whether the patients had been assigned for the express purpose for the prospective collection of data.

-> Thank you for your comments. We can assure you that data from participants were generated prior to the IRB approval and the patients had never been assigned to any group for the express purpose of informing a retrospective study.