Author’s response to reviews

Title: Anticholinergics aggravate the imbalance of the autonomic nervous system in stable chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

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The letter is our point-by-point responses to the comments raised by the reviewers. The comments are reproduced in quotes and our responses are given directly afterward.

1. “We note that the current submission contains some textual overlap with other previously published works. This overlap mainly exists in the Methods and Discussion section.” The overlap primarily occurs between your submission and the previously published source: “Effect of Tiotropium on Heart Rate Variability in Stable Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Patients” https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/jamp.2014.1125...”

Thanks for these comments. According to the suggestion, we have modified several parts as follows:

1)“All patients satisfied the following criteria: 1) subjects aged 40-80 years; 2) forced expiratory volume in one second to forced vital capacity (FEV1/FVC) ratio < 0.7 and FEV1 of 30 to 80% predicted after inhalation of 400µg albuterol. 3) being clinically stable at the enrollment of study, without acute exacerbation of COPD or respiratory tract infection within last 6 weeks. The exclusion criteria were: 1) diagnoses of heart diseases, such as coronary artery disease, valvular disease, arrhythmia, heart failure; 2) receiving beta-blockers, non-dihydropyridine calcium channel blockers, or other heart rate modulating medications; 3) with temporary/permanent pacemakers or implantable defibrillators. (Methods section, line 8-17, page 5).
2) Deleted the sentence: “This study was performed without commercial input into or involvement with the design, execution, and analysis or reporting.” (Methods section, line 23-25, page 5)

3) We have re-phrased Methods sections to minimize overlap. (Methods section, line 4-6, 11-12, 18-19, page 6; and line 3-5, page 7.)

4) “The mechanism may be that anticholinergic drugs cause autonomic disorders. Anticholinergics have two opposite effects on heart function[5]: suppression of parasympathetic control of heart rate and indirect reduction in sympathetic input to the heart. When the effect of anticholinergics on parasympathetic nerves is more intense, it increases the incidence of tachyarrhythmia and ischemia.” (Discussion section, line 12-17, page 12).

5) To emphasize our hypothesis was affirmed, we have added a brief description as follows: This result confirmed our hypothesis that anticholinergics would reduce vagal nervous activity. (Discussion section, line 12-13, page 10)

2. “Please provide a Keywords section after your Abstract that includes three to ten keywords representing the main content of the article.”

   We are grateful for the suggestion. We have added keywords section after Abstract, included four keywords.

3. “We recommend that you ask a native English-speaking colleague to help you copyedit the paper. If this is not possible, you may need to use a professional language editing service. Use of an editing service is neither a requirement nor a guarantee of acceptance for publication.

   Thanks for this comment. We have used a professional language editing service and improved the English writing in this paper. We have uploaded a copy of certificate of language editing into the Supplementary Material.