Author’s response to reviews

Title: Automated fastener versus manually tied knots in minimally invasive mitral valve repair: impact on operation time and short-term results

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Dear reviewers

Thank you very much for the very good and wise comments, that will increase the value of our paper!!!!

Point-by-point-response to Leonid Sternik:

1. height and weight included in table 1

2. by investigating the time-benefit for each surgeon himself we find the same difference. The number of operations for each surgeon are almost comparable in both groups:

   Knot Pusher: surgeon1 n=14, s2 n=8, s3 n=8
   CorKnot: s1 n=12, s2 n=10, s3 n=8

3. Glauber-aortic-clamp, added to the methods

Point-by-point-response to Toshiaki Ito:

1. You are totally right, learning curve is a very important issue. However, the Cor-knot System is so easy to use, that the learning curve is truly negligible. Experience added to the methods

2. Excluded patients and criteria added to the methods

3. Completely right: we used the same repair strategy in all patients: Ring and neochords, no resection! The amount of patients with anterior leaflet prolapse, which is more demanding and complex is added to the methods and to table one.
We have no video recording of all our patients, just in 5 of them. That’s a pity. We have photos of each final repair, which we used for counting the knots.

4. corrections done

5. pages added, where possible. but still two publications (like yours) in "epub ahead of print" status, which we added!

Again, thank you so much for your precious time

Sincerely yours

Martin Grapow