

## **Response to reviewer comments**

**Title:** Is there a difference between 19G core biopsy needle and 22G core biopsy needle in diagnosing the correct etiology? : A meta-analysis and systematic review

**Authors:** Manasa Kandula, MD, Matthew L. Bechtold, MD, Kaninika Verma, MD, Bhagat S Aulakh, MD, Deepak Taneja, MD, Srinivas R. Puli, MD

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### **Responses:**

1. *Please state years considered and language.*

In the data collection and extraction section under “Methods”, the years and language considered have been mentioned.

Search included articles of all languages (English and other languages that have been translated to English) from the year 1946 to present.

2. Date included in the meta-analysis was always obtained by intention to treat analysis of the original data as mentioned in the data collection and extraction section under “Methods”.

3. *Only two of the included studies compared directly G19 and G22 needles. In my opinion this fact may limit the strength of the conclusions of this meta-analysis. Authors should discuss this point in the discussion section.*

This point has been mentioned in the discussion section, when talking about the limitations of the study and factors that may have affected the results.

“The number of studies from which data was extracted was not equal for 19G (6 studies) and 22G (16 studies) as there were not as many studies done on the 19G yet, with only two studies that directly compared them, and this may have affected the results.”

4. *Do the results of the meta-analysis change, when studies published only as abstracts are excluded? Were additional data obtained from the Authors?*

Results of the meta-analysis were not analyzed excluding the studies published only as abstracts as this would reduce the number of studies and the quality of the study significantly. This can be done if this is essential. No additional data was obtained from the authors and this has been mentioned in the manuscript.

5. *The authors found a surprising low specificity for 22G needle; did they have any comment about this finding?*

Further studies are required to determine the factors that may have influenced the relatively low specificity of 22 G Procore needle seen in this pooled analysis, which may include the differences in sample yield and method of obtaining the sample. This has been mentioned in the discussion section.

6. *In Table 1 it was stated that Strand et al. studied pancreatic cystic lesion. I think this was not correct.*

Strand et al. studied solid pancreatic neoplasms and this has been corrected in Table 1.

7. *I think that the flow chart (Figure 1) is misleading: I cannot understand the difference between the two last boxes at the bottom of the figure.*

The last two boxes in Figure 1 have the final number of studies and N included, and this has been mentioned in two different boxes so that there is no confusion in terms of the number of studies (Even though there are 16 and 6 studies for 22G and 19G respectively, the total number of studies is 20 due to the overlap and the boxes are there just to make this clear). If this is not as clear, it can be changed to just one box and one of the boxes can be removed.