

August 18, 2014

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format

Title: The spectrum of MRI findings in congenital lumbar spinal stenosis

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Clinical Cases*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 11383

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

Reviewer #1: Very interesting observation. I would like the authors include more recent references.

Response: There is only one new paper on the subject (ref 11). It has been commented in the discussion and has been included in the references.

Reviewer #2: This is a very interesting article describing uncertain entity as congenital lumbar stenosis is. At the beginning I have had many questions and comments but everything is clearly stated at the Discussion chapter. Thank you for such an interesting text. The is only one technical remark: Image analysis chapter starts on the page 2 and again on the page 3. The publication of this article is highly recommended.

Response: Thank you for this remark. Image analysis is now described only once in the text.

Reviewer #3: Latest references should also be mentioned as all references are old and there is lot of latest literature in the topic with updated information regarding diagnosis with CT and MRI. There are certain other measurements for lumbar stenosis for comparison.

Response: Unfortunately, we found no other new paper in the literature except from the very recent we have added in ref 11. As described in the text, the most accurate measurements are the spinal canal area measurements, but we don't think they can prove useful and practical in usual everyday practice, in order to identify CLSS.

Reviewer #4: This is a study on MRI findings in congenital lumbar spinal stenosis. I read this manuscript with great interest; however, I have a serious concern about this study. I wonder if the conditions which the authors defined as CLSS were not congenital. The authors demonstrated that congenital lumbar spinal stenosis is associated with increased incidence of degenerative changes in specific osseous and soft-tissue elements of the lumbar spine. This condition could be degenerative spinal stenosis. In congenital spinal stenosis, patients have short pedicles and few degenerative changes. The authors repeated similar descriptions in Materials and Methods.

Response: The conditions we defined as CLSS and non-CLSS were based on absolute criteria, as described in the text. We agree that in CLSS patients have short pedicles and few degenerative changes. We found that, compared to control individuals, subjects with CLSS exhibited increased incidence of circumferential and shallow annular bulges, annular tears, disc herniations and spondylolisthesis. We think this is an interesting observation, for the first time described by means of MRI, and could trigger further investigation, as well.

Sincerely Yours

The authors