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## Response from the authors to the letter from De Caro et al.

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Dear Sir,

We would like to thank De Caro et al. for their comments concerning symmetrical selective neuronal necrosis in solitary tract nuclei. In their study published in "Stroke" in 2000 [1], they stressed the selective vulnerability of the neurons of the solitary tract nuclei exposed to ischemia after acute heart failure. According to them, this vulnerability could be explained by the intense metabolic activity of the solitary tract nuclei and by the vascularization of the medullary tegmentum. In our paper we also discussed these two factors and our discussion was based on our logical interpretation of the case reported compared particularly to the results of the previous and major works of MacLean

et al. [2] and Foix and Hillemand [3]. As we were limited in the discussion due to the imposed shortness of the article, we insufficiently quoted the work of De Caro et al.. We are sorry about this (minor) weakness. But we never pretended, as De Caro et al. did, that we were the first in the world to explain the selective vulnerability of the solitary tract nuclei in ischemic conditions. Indeed, the aim of our article was mainly to draw the attention of the forensic pathologist to the importance of neuropathological findings for the cause of death in autopsy cases, particularly those with a history of delayed death after ischemic hypoxia or acute heart failure.

### References

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