

**Authors' Reply to "Lung Volume Reduction Surgery in Patients With Emphysema: the Spanish Experience"**

**To the editor:** Firstly, we wish to thank de Pablo-Gafas and colleagues for their comments on our work<sup>1</sup> and for having disclosed their results<sup>2</sup> for lung volume reduction surgery. We agree on nearly all their points and only wish to say that a surgical procedure of the importance of lung volume reduction in advanced emphysema that only managed to obtain a significant functional improvement after 4 years in 7% (1 out of 14) of the patients in the series we reported, and in 15% (3 out of 20) in the series reported by the group in Puerta del Hierro is of doubtful value when carried out according to current indications. The line we should follow is probably that suggested by the findings of the National Emphysema Treatment Trial (NETT),<sup>3</sup> which significantly limits candidates to those who have predominantly upper-lobe emphysema, who have poor exercise tolerance, and who are not in a group at risk (forced expired volume in the first second less than 20% of reference and carbon monoxide diffusing capacity less than 20%).

Additionally, consistent with the NETT results for the group at risk, results for our first 12 patients<sup>4</sup> did show that those at a more advanced stage of disease—that is those with more dyspnea, poorer quality of life, and worse nutritional status—had a worse clinical course after surgery.

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