**SUPPLEMENTARY DATA**

**Bulbar weakness:** To estimate the severity of eating and swallowing difficulties the following scales were used:
***Food textures:***

*Eats all textures of food = 0 points*

*Eats cut up or small pieces of food to avoid hard/chewy foods  = 1 point*

*Eats minced/pureed food = 2 points*

*Minimal oral intake = 3 points*

***Eating a meal:***

*Able to share a whole meal in the same time as other sharing the meal = 0 points*

*Needs some additional time to consume a whole meal compared to the others (<10 min) = 1 point*

*Needs some additional time to consume a whole meal compared to the others (<10 min) = 2 point*

*Unable to consume a whole meal even with additional time or assistance = 3 min*

***Swallowing:***

*Never has problems when swallowing and never chokes on food/drink = 0 points*

*May experience occasional (< 1 per month) problems swallowing certain types of food or occasionally chokes = 1 point*

*Has regular trouble swallowing food/drink or chokes on food/drink (>1 per month) = 2 points*

*Has trouble swallowing saliva or secretions = 3 points*

**Diplopia and ptosis:** Quantitative myasthenia gravis (QMG) grading scale was used to assess the severity of diplopia and ptosis. The test includes looking at an object and measuring the time until diplopia (reported by the patient) and ptosis manifest.

*grade 0 – manifestation of diplopia and ptosis after 60 sec from the beginning of the test*

*grade 1 - manifestation of diplopia and ptosis between 59 sec and 11 sec from the beginning of the test*

*grade 2 - manifestation of diplopia and ptosis between 10 sec and 1 sec from the beginning of the test*

*grade 3 - spontaneous diplopia*

**Axial weakness:** The evaluation of axial weakness was  measured by the time needed to raise from the floor prior to and after the described muscle strength tests.

Axial weakness was also evaluated by asking patients to lay and to lift their head to 45o and keep this position for 2 min. QMG grading scale was used to assess the severity:

*grade 1 – keeps the position between 119 sec and 30 sec*

*grade 2 - keeps the position between 29 sec and 1 sec*

*grade 3 - unable to perform*