Reviewer's report

Title: Effectiveness of polaprezinc for low-dose aspirin-induced small-bowel mucosal injuries as evaluated by capsule endoscopy: a pilot randomized controlled study

Version: 4 Date: 28 January 2013

Reviewer: Hiroki Endo

Reviewer's report:

In this randomized controlled study on small number of patients, the authors concluded that polaprezinc treatment protects against low-dose aspirin-induced small bowel injury. The manuscript is interesting and well written, however, has several limitations.

1: It is unclear how the authors define the “low-dose aspirin-induced small bowel mucosal injuries”. The possibility that the CE findings were not direct results of aspirin. Neither follow-up CE exams were done after aspirin withdrawal, nor do we have matched controls with no aspirin. Certainly the findings of the study are suggestive, but not definitive. We have not histological diagnosis of the lesions (not all the ulcers of the small bowel are Crohn’s ulcer or aspirin ulcers).

2: How the sample size calculated?

2: The results were presented as the mean and standard deviation. The sample size was small. It is therefore expected that the data would not be normally distributed. Therefore, I think that mean and SD may not be appropriate method to present such data.

3: The concealment of allocation is unclear.

4: Discussion: “In previous studies, no trend was seen in the anatomic distribution of aspirin-induced small bowel injuries” – Ref. 17 have shown that aspirin-associated small bowel ulcers tended to be located in the distal part of the small bowel.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.