Reviewer's report

Title: Are two readers more reliable than one? A study of upper neck ligament scoring on magnetic resonance images

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Reviewer: Pedro Machado

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Review of the article “Are two readers more reliable than one? A study of upper neck ligament scoring on magnetic resonance images” by Espeland et al.

The authors investigated the reliability of using one or two readers (consensus approach for discordant cases) in a MRI exercise of upper neck ligament scoring. This topic is interesting and methodologically relevant as measuring is critical for physicians and researchers. The article is clear and well written.

Comment:

1. Sum scores are often used in MRI scoring systems to assess status and change in clinical trials and observational studies. As an additional methodological exercise I suggest complementing the analyses with the calculation of an upper neck MRI sum score (0-12) and comparison of the sum scores (reader A vs. reader B vs. A and B combined vs. average of A and B) regarding:
   a) Intra-reader reliability using intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs)
   b) Smallest detectable change and Bland and Altman plots with 95% levels of agreement

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.