Reviewer’s report

Title: Can homeopathy improve chemotherapy-induced emesis in early breast cancer patients? A randomized, multicentric, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial

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Reviewer: Matthias Rostock

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This is a very interesting article describing a well and thoroughly conducted placebo-controlled RCT studying the effects of a complex homeopathic remedy on chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting. Only some minor essential revisions are needed, which, I think, would increase the clarity of the article.

In the abstract, the crucial statement “High percentages of patients … reported that nausea had no impact on their quality of life” implies that nausea as such does not affect the patients’ quality of life. Instead, the authors wanted to say that high percentages of patients (irrespective of the treatment group) didn’t experience nausea # please reformulate. Generally, a number of formulations might be improved in linguistic respect.

Throughout the article, the authors use the brand name of the homeopathic remedy, which is not a good practice in a scientific article – please use the brand name only in the methods section in the context of the description of the complex homeopathic remedy.

Discussion: The homeopathic remedy was only given on day -1 to day 2 whereas nausea was assessed until day 6 – why? This should be explained / discussed in the discussion section. I think it would have been interesting to find out whether administration of the homeopathic remedy would have improved nausea on days 3 to 6 (especially when conventional anti-emetic medication was finished).

It may be interesting to the authors to know that already in the 1990s, a prospective randomized pilot study on the effects of a homeopathic remedy combination was conducted in Heidelberg, Germany – unfortunately the results of this study were only published as an abstract in a German journal and in German language (Daub E, Gerhard I, Bastert G (2000): Homöopathische Antiemetika bei Chemotherapie, eine prospektive, randomisierte Studie. Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde 60:S157). In this study, too, homeopathic treatment was not found superior to placebo.

Without any doubt, the present article should be published in BMC Cancer, it describes a very consequentially and carefully conducted study examining a highly relevant issue concerning complementary therapies in oncology.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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.