Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of pelvic physiotherapy on reduction of functional constipation in children: design of a multicentre randomised controlled trial

Version: 2 Date: 8 January 2013

Reviewer: Mizu Jiang

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The manuscript described study protocols for randomized controlled trials about the effect of pelvic physiotherapy on reduction of functional constipation in children. The study design is to test the hypothesis that pelvic physiotherapy (PPT) may be effective for the treatment of functional constipation, but there are two major compulsory revisions.

1. Functional constipation can be caused by delayed colonic transit or dysfunction of the pelvic floor muscles. If the delayed colonic transit is the major factor of constipation for the patients, the expected effect of PPT maybe not well. It is recommended that the patients should be excluded in the study only because of delayed colonic transit.

2. The standard medical care (SMC) for children with functional constipation is mainly consists of a behavioral approach and toilet training (TT) along with the prescription of laxatives. The author hypothesized that the combination of PPT and SMC will be more effective than SMC alone for constipated children. They divided the subject into two groups: control group received only SMC and experimental group had SMC supplemented with PPT. All the patients take laxatives; however, the author did not explain duration of taking laxatives. Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish the effect from laxatives or PPT treatment. I recommend the author add a third group including patients who only receive PPT treatment.

There are two minor essential revisions:

1. Randomization and blinding: the study is open trial, because it is difficult to blind the investigators and parents.

2. The paper needs a minor revision on language due to some spelling errors.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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.