Reviewer’s report

Title: Equal antipyretic efficacy of oral and rectal acetaminophen: a randomized controlled trial [ISRCTN 11886401]

Version: 2 Date: 19 April 2005

Reviewer: Ran D Goldman

Reviewer’s report:

General

This trial compares antipyretic efficacy of acetaminophen administered orally or rectally. Despite its wide use, clinical evidence of antipyretic effect of oral versus rectal acetaminophen is limited. In general, the paper is clearly written and uses consistent wording and presentation of information. In general, this is a good paper and can be accepted for publication if adequately revised.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Add a section of limitations, weaknesses, and imprecision of the study results.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Please specify if a patient assent form (for children aged 7 and over) was obtained.
2. Please state how many care providers involved in the study, or mention it was not recorded.
3. Who generated the allocation sequence and who enrolled participants.
4. Were data analysts blinded?
5. How the success of blinding was evaluated?
7. Why a standard deviation of one hour was used in sample size calculation?
8. Description of who assessed outcomes and how many assessors were there.
9. Standard deviation is unnecessary for the median duration of fever (25th and 75th percentile range is preferred).
10. The word hypothermia should probably be changes, since this is a specific term meaning ‘a dangerous lowering of body-core temperature, caused by losing heat faster than it is produced by the body’- I assume the authors meant differently.
11. Background, 5th line – ‘presentations’ should be revised to ‘preparations’

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The conclusion section (page 12) is too long. The authors should consider shortening it.
What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests