Reviewer's report

Title: The relationship between chronic type III acromioclavicular joint dislocation and cervical spine symptoms

Version: 1 Date: 12 June 2009

Reviewer: Jerrilyn Cambron

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
1. None.

Minor essential revisions
1. The results section states “After dichotomization, again, no significant association was found between the studied parameters and the mean lordosis value in the AC dislocation group (16 degrees) and in the control group (26 degrees) (p value ranging from 0.11 to 0.88).” The phrase “was found” is duplicated.

2. Of minor but significant note is that Figures 4a and 4b are on different scales (NPQ% of 0 to 50 versus -5 to 10, and frequency of 0 to 7 versus 0 to 50). Likewise for Figures 5a and 5b. It might be best to revise the scales so that they are consistent so that there are no misinterpretation by readers, or at least make note of the differing scales in the text or on the Figures.

Discretionary revisions
1. The introduction seems to focus on surgical versus non-surgical outcomes, whereas the manuscript includes only non-surgical subjects. Is there a hypothesis that the surgical outcomes regarding neck pain would be different from those presented in the manuscript? There is no discussion regarding this but it seems inherently assumed.

2. How did you decide to stop after 34 consecutive patients? Why not 30 or 35 or 50? How did you come to that decision?

3. The results section states “After dichotomization, again, no significant association was found between the studied parameters and the mean lordosis value in the AC dislocation group (16 degrees) and in the control group (26 degrees) (p value ranging from 0.11 to 0.88).” What do you mean by ‘after dichotomization’? Are you talking about the two different groups of AC dislocation versus control or are you talking about dividing the groups into normal curvature versus abnormal curvature? And, if the comparison is dichotomized, what do you mean by p value ranging from 0.11 to 0.88? Wouldn’t there be only one p value comparing one group with another? All other statements in the results section were very clear and well-written. However, this statement is confusing to me.
Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.