Reviewer’s report

Title: Anterolateral approach with tibial tubercle osteotomy versus standard medial approach for primary total knee arthroplasty: does it matter?

Version: 2 Date: 5 December 2009

Reviewer: Jose C Alcerro

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Methods
I believe it would be relevant to describe what the distribution of surgical procedures among centers was considering this is a multicenter study.

Was there any specific consideration to perform or avoid patellar resurfacing?

Results
When comparing operation time the results showed there was a significant difference between TubOT and MPA. Was there a significant difference between surgeons performing the procedure?

Considering a previous surgical intervention affects the integrity of all tissues. Where these previous surgeries taken into account when assessing postoperative outcomes?

Discussion
In making reference to your results were no difference was found in prosthetic or mechanical alignment between groups you compare with the results of a 12% error rate found with a minimally invasive procedure. Considering exposure achieved between these procedures is different, I wouldn’t deem appropriate to compare one another.

When mentioning the complication of the MPA you attribute as the probable cause of anterior knee pain an altered patellar tracking as a consequence of the surgical approach. Was this patient resurfaced? Could this complication be attributed to how the patella was managed initially?

Tables
In the presentation of results in the tables 1 and 3, what does the + stand for? (SD, SE …)

Minor Essential Revisions

Discussion
“However, compared to others the operation time of the present study using the
parapatellar lateral approach including tibial tubercle osteotomy, is comparable and to some reported minimal invasive approaches even lower.” This phrase should be reviewed for writing.

Figures
It would be important to reference the figures along the manuscript to guide the reader on the instruments and approach utilized

Discretionary Revisions
Line numbering would be ideal for an easier way to reference all comments to the manuscript

**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’ below