Reviewer’s report

Title: A comparison of ultrasound and clinical examination in the detection of flexor tenosynovitis in early rheumatoid arthritis

Version: 1 Date: 29 September 2010

Reviewer: Hilde Berner Hammer

Reviewer’s report:

The objectives of the present study were to examine the frequency and distribution of finger flexion tenosynovitis in recent onset RA patients and to compare the findings between clinical and US examinations.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
The methods are not appropriate and not well described:
- The number of patients is described as both 33 and 50
- What was the criterion for only examining 160 finger flexion tendons and not 330 (or 500)?
- The description of the US assessments does not include the full length of the tendon; it rather seems to be a combination of joint and finger flexor tendon examination
- Why describing examination of joints for synovitis and erosions when this is not the objective? This should either be deleted or explained why it was necessary.
- The results should include the different number of tendons affected in each patient by US or clinical examination, and describe the different number of tenosynovitis found by US compared to clinical examination on a tendon level in all patients
- Almost the same number of patients was found to have tenosynovitis by US or clinical examination. However, there was not the same patients with tenosynovitis using the two methods? The exact number of discrepancy should be given.
- General comment: The manuscript is not clearly presented, and more effort should be made to improve the text.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests