Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Manual therapy followed by specific active exercises versus a placebo followed by specific active exercises on the improvement of functional disability in patients with chronic non specific low back pain: a randomized controlled trial

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**Version:** 2  **Date:** 23 December 2011

**Author's response to reviews:** see over
Lausanne, December 22nd, 2011

Concerned: submission of a manuscript untitled “Manual therapy followed by specific active exercises versus a placebo followed by specific active exercises on the improvement of functional disability in patients with chronic non specific low back pain: a randomized controlled trial”

Dear M. Patel,

By this letter, we would like to submit our manuscript for publication. Recent studies have attested spinal and cortical modifications in order to explain altered response to noxious stimuli, poor body perception and disturbed psychological and cognitive manifestations of chronic non specific low back pain (CNSLBP) patients. Meanwhile, current observations tend to confirm positive effects of manual therapy on pain, inappropriate neuromuscular response and altered psychological state. However, clinically, no study has thoroughly investigated these effects (e.g., the analgesic effect) at each therapeutic session, and only a few have evaluated the long-term role and effectiveness of manual therapy when combined to another therapy (e.g., specific active exercises) on pain, disability and fear-avoidance beliefs. So, in this study, the authors wanted first, to confirm the instant analgesic effect of manual therapy over a placebo, and second, to examine if this short-term positive effect on pain might facilitate the practice of subsequent active exercises and improve outcome in CNSLBP.

We hope the results of this study will help health care professionals to position themselves on the clinical relevance of manual therapy, either as an isolated modality or combined with another therapy, for CNSLBP.

We look forward to hearing from you in a near future,

Yours sincerely

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