Reviewer's report

Title: Upper limb position control in fibromyalgia

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Reviewer: Kerstin Wentz

Reviewer’s report:

The concept of chronic pain is used in a very wide sense. Many different kinds of pain may be chronic and whether fibromyalgia is representative of chronic pain conditions that also affects a large subgroup of the population is not made clear. In the background section fibromyalgia is described in terms of being a non-inflammatory disease and also associated with alterations in central processing in pain. Simultaneously from recent research the phenomenon of central inflammation in fibromyalgia is reported (e.g. Kadetoff et al., 2011). This makes the background section account appear as somewhat simplified or insufficient. This same principle seems also to apply to the question posed on neural processes that might induce alterations in neuromuscular control in chronic pain syndromes. There seem to be a kind of leap in coherence from muscular dynamics to the phenomenon of chronic pain meaning that sufficient argumentation regarding different dimensions of pain and links to muscular dynamics is not presented.

The participant’s characteristics are presented in table 1 and regarding tender point count and the FIQ score the control group is missing. Tender point count and FIQ scores are also not used in the calculations which makes the presence of these figures in table 1 not appearing as thoroughly planned.

From table 1 can also be learned that the fibromyalgia group is physically significantly different from the healthy control group regarding body mass, upper arm girth and almost significantly physically different from the controls regarding height and epicondylar humerus width. The groups are thereby physically different (shorter, heavier with a wider girth). A relationship between these differences and a higher level of neck and shoulder pain (table 1) cannot be excluded. This same objection might apply to all the different measurements accounted for in the result section.

Simultaneously this kind of investigations stands forth as important when trying to understand more regarding e.g. the dynamics of different defined conditions of pain and might thereby constitute a base for an article introducing a method?

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.