Reviewer's report

Title: Cross-cultural adaptation of the VISA-A questionnaire, an index of clinical severity for patients with Achilles tendinopathy, with reliability, validity and structure evaluations

Version: 1 Date: 29 December 2004

Reviewer: Karim Khan

Reviewer's report:

General

Tendinopathies represent an under-recognised societal burden. There has been an increase in research interest in these conditions in the past decade. Although there have been many new therapies studied, outcome measures for clinical studies of tendinopathy have been little researched. This manuscript extends previous work by (i) making an outcome measure available in a widely-used European language, (ii) providing important reliability and validity data, and (iii) proving a novel factor analysis of a scale for Achilles tendinopathy.

The introduction clearly outlines the reasons why this study is needed and the 3 specific aims. The methods are comprehensive and meticulous. That 11 physiotherapy clinics in Sweden contributed is a strength of the study. The translation-back-translation approach is rigorous and the numbers for the various components of validity are appropriate. The population sampled is ideal. The results are well set out and concise. The discussion is comprehensive and clear. The authors explain the main contributions and address why specific results (i.e., the mean VISA score in the 'non-surgical' population) might differ from those found in the English language study that outlined the VISA scoring system (Robinson et al.). This study is an important contribution to the clinical trials that the authors are undertaking and the data will be valuable for other researchers considering Achilles tendinopathy studies. The factor analysis is novel in this field and provides an excellent template for other researchers in sports medicine considering evaluation of outcome measures in various conditions at various sites in the musculoskeletal system. A highlight of this methodological study is its rigour.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
NIL

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
NIL NOTED

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
The authors may wish to extend their discussion of the factor analysis from its current one sentence by 2-3 sentences so that it makes a short paragraph. The factor analysis is an important contribution and I believe the reader would be interested in the author’s further interpretation. Was the result expected? Could the VISA-A potentially be shortened to include fewer questions?

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I was involved in the original 'Robinson, 2001' manuscript as a coauthor and hold a copyright on the VISA-A score (English version). There is no financial conflict as the VISA-A score can be used free of charge.