Reviewer's report

Title: The reliability of postural balance measures in single and dual tasking in elderly fallers and non-fallers.

Version: 2 Date: 31 October 2008

Reviewer: Lorenzo Chiari

Reviewer's report:

The authors adequately addressed almost all of my previous concerns. The manuscript largely improved and is now very exhaustive and well written. I still have few minor comments that you can find listed in the following.

***Minor Essential Revisions

Background

Still remain some flaws in the description of the state of the art about previous reliability studies. In particular the third paragraph that describes the state of the art need some improvement. The cited studies: Benvenuti et al., 1999, Corriveau et al., 2000 and 2001, and Lafond 2004, need to be better described and authors have to underline what you can find in these works and what is still to be done and why.

I would suggest authors to further stress and deepen the points of novelty of their study and to better explain 1) the relevance of reliability study in fallers, and 2) the additional value of also considering a concurrent cognitive task in the reliability study.

Methods

Clarity is largely improved now.

Page 4: why do you mention a 30-s duration? Aren’t your trials all 20-s long?

At the end of page 4, there is a: "3)"; I think it’s a mistake since I don’t see items 1) and 2).

Discussion

Page 9. ‘Several investigators have demonstrated that deterioration of balance control…’ : after this sentence a single reference follows...maybe you could add a work by Nardone A et al., 1994.

Page 10 line 1-9. First you mention that your subjects took a comfortable stance position, and at the end of this paragraph you say that you standardized foot positions. From Methods, I understood that you ask subjects to take a comfortable stance and you marked foot outlines for different repetitions of the same subjects. So, foot position is standardized for each subject, but not across subjects. Please make this point clearer.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests