Reviewer's report

Title: Bovine Explant Model Of Degeneration Of The Intervertebral Disc

Version: 2 Date: 6 January 2008

Reviewer: William Hutton

Reviewer's report:

Thank-you for making some of the changes I suggested. Your changes have improved the paper.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) The title to your paper is not what you have given. The title is reflected in the last sentence of your Conclusion. Please change it accordingly.

2) Your Abstract is quite good. Change in tact to intact

3) M & M: Samples 1.5 to 2 cm at the top and 1.5 to 2.3 cm at the bottom. Enzyme Digestion. There is a space between a number and the unit. Please do this throughout the whole text including the captions. Please use radiograph rather than X-ray. I am sure you know the difference and that this is just an oversight. I cannot seem to tally up the 38 motion segments, where did they all go? 96-well-plate method not 96 well plate method.

4) Discussion: The Discussion is meant to be a discussion of your results and their significance in relation to the results of others. You do not mention your results until halfway through the third paragraph. The first two paragraphs of your Discussion read like an Introduction. However I note that the other reviewers do not object to it, so I will concede on this. Please remove "( 4 kg, 600 cycles at a frequency of 1 Hz; Dr Salt, personal communication)". That is no help to anyone.

5) Conclusion: The first three sentences are nothing to do with your actual experiment. You could have written these at any time. Remove the first three sentences and leave your Conclusion as "We have developed an explant model which mimics some aspects of disc degeneration and would be suitable for testing the new generation of injectable therapies for treating degenerate discs in humans". The Conclusion at the end of your Abstract is quite good.

There are no Minor or Discretionary Revisions

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'