Reviewer’s report

Title: Natural Course of Intra-Articular Shifting Bone Marrow Edema Syndrome of the Knee

Version: 1 Date: 24 November 2007

Reviewer: David Felson

Reviewer’s report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached) (all the below revisions are compulsory).

1. in the second paragraph, it is stated that there is consensus as to vascular etiology. This reviewer is unfamiliar with any consensus regarding this. Please review the evidence on this matter. Perhaps just the second sentence of this paragraph should remain?

2. Please define mild lipid disorders (what exactly and what were the lipid elevations) and specify exact glucose and liver function tests. Be clear about BMI’s of all patients. It would be helpful to know the presentation of these patients—did they all present with knee pain?; was this acute or chronic? Was there a history of injury preceding the pain? Did any have histories of knee surgery? Did any have a history of AVN or migratory bme’s in other joints (e.g. hips; feet)? Had any been treated with steroids before these BME’s developed?

3. The MRI’s are helpful. While the quality of the images is not great, they suggest that these lesions are not subcortical and this should be noted by the authors. They should provide at least one other patient with shifting or resolution.

4. This paper would be much easier to understand if the specific patients were described in a table with columns representing the time points. The far left column could describe the MRI findings at Time 1 and the next column MRI findings at Time 2, etc. The narrative description makes it hard to keep patients straight.

5. The discussion needs to be proofread by a native English speaker.

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

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
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 importance in its field

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:

no competing interests.