Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of the in vitro skin permeation of antiviral drugs from penciclovir 1% cream and acyclovir 5% cream used to treat herpes simplex virus infection

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Reviewer: John J Docherty

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment once again on this paper. I appreciate the changes the authors made to their discussion by deleting those parts that dealt with an actual infection in viable tissue. However, there continues to be a problem with the way this paper portrays itself. My previous comments about their model being non-viable applies to all of the manuscript. For example the first two pages of the “Introduction” (which by the way is too long) describes in great detail drug activity in viable tissue such as phosphorylation, inactivating DNA pol., inhibition of viral DNA synthesis, competitive inhibition etc., etc., etc. It’s not until the reader has read almost two pages of the “Introduction” do we get to the last sentence of the second paragraph (“Thus, in vitro…”) do the authors begin to indicate what their intentions are. In the last paragraph of the “Introduction” they state that “…skin permeation was assessed using human skin…”. For the readers sake they should clearly state here that it was non-viable human cadaver skin.

There is nothing experimentally wrong with this paper but because of the use of non-viable tissue I question the significance of the work and interest to the reader. If the authors had done the studies they mention in the last sentence of their discussion this paper would be considerably more relevant.

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests