Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Motion style acupuncture treatment (MSAT) for acute low back pain with severe disability: a multicenter, randomized, controlled trial protocol

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 24 October 2011

**Reviewer:** Ronald Feise

**Reviewer’s report:**

The study revisions have improved this research protocol. I encourage this research team to make the following changes, because this is an important study.

**Major Compulsory Revisions:**

1. Statistical Analysis, page 15: Statistical testing via a t-test, Mann-Whitney U-test, Chi-squared test or Fisher’s are irrelevant to practitioners and patients. Your primary statistical calculations should provide effect size and/or number needed to treat with a measure of precision (e.g., 95% confidence interval).

**Minor Essential Revisions:**

1. Abstract. Discussion, Rewrite “The results of this trial will provide evidence for the effectiveness of MSAT as a treatment for acute low back pain.” Recommend: “The results of this trial will be discussed.”

2. Background. Replace “exists” with “was found” in the following:

“A systematic review of the literature concluded that acupuncture is effective for pain relief and functional improvement in chronic back pain in the short term, but that, for acute back pain, no evidence of the effectiveness of acupuncture exists [15].”

3. Background. Rewrite the following:

“However, there are a variety of ways to administer acupuncture. Therefore, the results may vary if acupuncture is selected according the characteristics of the disease (e.g., acute or chronic).

Motion style acupuncture treatment (MSAT) is different from traditional acupuncture treatments, and it is used to reduce musculoskeletal pain and improve functional status in South Korea.”

Recommend:

“There are a variety of ways to administer acupuncture. Motion style acupuncture treatment (MSAT) is different from traditional acupuncture treatments, and is often used in South Korea. Yet, we have not found any clinical trials examining the effectiveness of MSAT.”

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests’.