Reviewer's report

Title: Efficacy and Safety of Fermented Turmeric Powder in Subjects with Elevated Alanine Transaminase Levels: a randomised controlled study

Version: 3 Date: 8 October 2012

Reviewer: Song-Yi Kim

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

In this manuscript the authors conducted randomized controlled trial of Fermented Turmeric Powder for liver function. The authors appear to have made a great effort in this study. But there are some comments and suggestion for their work.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   : Moderately good. The aim of this study is to investigate the effect and safety of Fermented Turmeric Powder. And unfortunately, the study focused on 'effect' of FTP. The safety endpoint such as results of serum creatinine was not mentioned.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   : I'm not sure that the methods are well described. Furthermore, there is a need to elaborate the article including methods and results. In the methods parts, article was not described according to the procedures. More concise and transparent statements are necessary. Also, details of methods had been left off the methods: in details of a screening test, use of placebo (i.e., ingredient), and manufacturing process of FTP; information about how to determine the dose of curcumin).

3. Are the data sound?
   : Some parts of the results are difficult to understand: “no longer”; second paragraph in “subsect disposition and baseline characteristics”. In the manuscript, limited results, mainly positive and duplicated outcomes, were described. Unfortunately, I could not find the meaning of each result. Figure 2 did not show SD value. There is a need to reconsider that each Table and Figure contains duplicate information. Please let me know the evidence of final sentence of safety part.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   : Moderately good, but there is need to reconsider based on CONSORT statement.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
As mentioned earlier, results are biased toward positive. The interpretations of results are not enough to find meaningful implication of study.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   I’m not sure that limitations of the study were sufficiently addressed.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   Good.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   Title: The term of ‘efficacy and safety’ seems too broad.
   Abstract: Overall, the sentences are a little too lengthy. Also, please add the necessary information.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
   I strongly recommend that this study needs some rewriting before being published

Minor comments

(Background)
- 1st paragraph, final sentence:
  It is similar to other reference’s background (Hepatoprotective activity of Coccinia grandis leaves against carbon tetrachloride induced hepatic injury in rats. R Varatharajan, P Promwichit - International journal of pharmacology, 2009), thus an in-depth analysis of the plant-derived natural products’ studies is necessary.
- 2nd paragraph:
  Please add the related references.
- Final paragraph:
  Please clarify the objective of the study.

(Methods)
- Please unify by British English or American English.
- 4th sentence have to move toward results part.
- “Statistical analysis”: Please add the reference for the sample size calculation.

(Results)
- Please add all of the results of outcome measures what was mentioned in methods.

(Discussions)
Please discuss implication of this study, comparison with previous studies, and limitation and strength of this study. It was a superficial analysis, I think.
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests