Reviewer's report

Title: Prokinetic and laxative effects of the crude methanolic extract of Viola betonicifolia whole plant

Version: 3 Date: 17 October 2012

Reviewer: Omar Ameer

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Comments to authors:
1- There are some English and typo errors that need to be corrected as for e.g:
   In the abstract section, “Mice were used in the” remove “the” as it appears for the first time in the manuscript.
The words “in vivo” or “in vitro” can be italicized or hyphenated “in-vivo” or “in-vitro” but never both throughout the manuscript. Universally adhere to one style.
I would like to see the plant name among the keywords.
Figures 2 A and 2 B are not clear enough. They could be redrawn again to be clearer.
Figure 2 legends, with or without not the opposite would be more appropriate.
Petroleum ether should be written in full not as pet ether as it appears sometimes. The same goes for carbamylcholine or CCh or carbachol. These words or abbreviations should be defined in the first place then can be abbreviated. Again adhere to one type of wording throughout the figures, table and text.
Under phytochemical screening section, alkaloids are under total saponins and vice versa. Please revise this.
2- Specify the number of animals in each study under the animals section. Also it would be better if the authors specify the mode of action of each pharmacological agent used in the study whenever they appear in the first place rather than at the discussion part of the manuscript. e.g Atropine, a non specific muscarinic receptor antagonist....etc.
3- The introduction is too short and some more valuable information can be incorporated to enhance quality, for instance, previous pharmacological investigations that support the folk use of this plant in the list of indications given in the first paragraph, mechanisms of actions, previously tested isolated constituents,...etc.
4- What do the authors mean by “whole plant”? Is it the aerial part plus the roots? Please specify.
5- The authors specified different folk uses for the plant. I would imagine that a water extract is normally prepared by people and consumed as an infusion/tea
for traditional use. What is the rationale for the use of a methanolic extract in this work? It is obvious that methanol has greater extracting capabilities yet a water extract should have been tested as well to justify the folk use.

6-Under in-vitro experiments section, needs two or three lines to describe tissue excision a bit more in details.

7-The authors should clearly justify the screening of these two classes of compounds only? What about terpenoids or flavonoids …etc. Possible referencing is advised.

8-It would be great if the authors add some actual traces for the jejunal and ileal preparations showing the drug, extract, blockers effects responses.

9-The phytochemical screening is rather poor, I was wondering if the authors can at least show some activity guided fractionation of the active extract or some HPLC traces of the extractives with a possible standard candidate. Especially, for such a plant with a great value and numerous traditional uses it would be a more elegant study if the authors have showed some chemical profiling details. There is no excuse for this manuscript to have been preliminary as the authors did publish a paper on the same plant in BMC just recently.

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests