Reviewer’s report

Title: Serotonergic mechanism of the relieving effect of bee venom acupuncture on oxaliplatin-induced neuropathic cold allodynia in rats

Version: 2 Date: 30 September 2014

Reviewer: Min Li

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
Reviewer’s comments:
The manuscript studied serotonergic mechanism of the relieving effect of bee venom acupuncture on oxaliplatin-induced neuropathic cold allodynia in rats.

The reviewer’s comments are:

1. The reviewer is curious why the serotonin’s level was increased after bee venom acupuncture (BVA)? Is serotonin from bee venom? If serotonin is from bee venom, how the serotonin moved from subcutaneous place to the spinal cord? Anyway, the reviewer might be wrong.

2. How to extract serotonin from spinal cord? P8, Elisa. The reviewer can not find full text paper for Reference 32.

3. Figure1(a), y axis. How to measure the protein level?

4. How much is the volume per rat used for BVA treatment?

5. How to make sure the subcutaneous administration was in the GV3? After BVA, the rats would be fixed for tail reflex testing. All these procedure are stressful. How to minimize the stress?

6. Antagonists studies: because some chemicals were dissolved in 20% DMSO, the vehicle group which only inject 20%DMSO should be added.

7. Where did the antagonists inject intrathecally? How much the volume for the intrathecal injection?

8. After intrathecal injection, the rats needed to wake up from anesthesia, recover from the injury. When did the BVA perform after intrathecal injection?

9. Discussion:
P10, 2nd paragraph: “Unlike the EA-induced analgesia mainly involving the endogenous opioid system, the analgesic effects of BVA are known to be mediated by the non-opioid, descending noradrenergic system [12, 15, 33, 34]. In consistent with this, we previously reported
that EA significantly attenuates oxaliplatin-induced cold allodynia in rats via the activation of the endogenous opioids, not the noradrenergic system [35]. " The reviewer can not understand these two sentences.

P10, 3nd paragraph: “In this study, we observed that BVA treatment significantly increases the levels of spinal…”. Change “this” to “the present”.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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