Reviewer's report

**Title:** Electroacupuncture versus Diclofenac in Symptomatic Treatment of Osteoarthritis of Knee: a randomized controlled trial

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**Reviewer:** Dr Betsy Singh

**Level of interest:** A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Advice on publication:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the compulsory revisions

Discretionary Revisions: 1) Believe that the issue of the inflammatory component of OA is more controversial that implied in the BACKGROUND section. Would suggest a broader presentation of inflammatory issues and other related factors in OA. 2) A broader presentation of other therapies used to treat OA and the relative effectiveness of the therapies/products tested based on available data would be beneficial. 3) Authors might want to address why persons were selected for inclusion regardless of K-L grade.

Compulsory Revisions: 1) Authors must emphasize that differences were found between two subscales of the standardized WOMAC scale; not in total score or function. 2) Authors must explain their choice of points and why they did not use other points commonly used in OA acupuncture research. 3) Why did the authors use the number and frequency of treatments? These are not the same as have been used in other studies of acupuncture and OA; so, the authors should explain why they chose this number and frequency. 4) Were the patients recruited naive to acupuncture therapy? 5) Authors should explain their decision to place electrostimulation at every point. 6) Description of responders mentions '5 items'. I believe the authors are referring to scales and other measures. Since 'items' may be part of scales, they may want to clarify this phrase. 7) Authors should explain/justify the use of median scores for comparison instead of mean scores for some of the analyses performed. 8) In the 8th paragraph of the results section the authors refer to 'contrusions'. I believe they may mean 'contusions,' 9) Discussion should mention and explain why nonsignificant p values were reported for
seven factors: Lequesne, WOMAC Total score, the disability Index, 50 feet walk time (both change and actual time), change in use of paracetamol, and average amount of paracetamol consumed. These findings must not be ignored in the discussion.

**Competing interests:**

None declared.