Reviewer's report

Title: No effect of 6-month intake of glucosamine sulfate on Modic changes or high intensity zones in the lumbar spine: sub-group analysis of a randomized controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 6 March 2012

Reviewer number: 1

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This paper is clear and presents results in a format that would be useful to other investigators carrying out secondary research. I have only a few minor points for the authors to consider.

1. Page 4, paragraph 1, four lines from end. The word “tend” should be “tends”.
2. Page 5, paragraph 2, line 2. The words “elicited into” might be better as “led to”.
3. Page 5, paragraph 2, two lines from end. It is unclear on what basis the authors consider HIZ a plausible marker of an osteoarthritic degenerative process.
4. Page 12, paragraph 2, last sentence. How confident are the authors of this conclusion, given the sample size and statistical uncertainties in the data?
5. Page 13, paragraph 1. It would be helpful to record the time period over which patients were recruited to the study (to go with the time period over which follow-up MRI was carried out that is given in the next paragraph).
6. Page 8, paragraphs 1 and 2. Have you thought of giving confidence intervals for the differences in proportions rather than just p values? This would give the readers a better feel for how strong the negative results are.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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