Reviewer's report

Title: How effective is Ametop 4% gel, before a peripherally inserted central catheter, in reducing procedural pain in infants: a randomized double-blind placebo controlled trial [ISRCTN75884221]

Version: 3 Date: 28 February 2006

Reviewer: Anna Taddio

Reviewer's report:

General

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Please add information about safety parameters (as these represent outcomes that authors claim were important) and physiologic parameters. Both are recognized as secondary outcomes. Post-hoc analysis of PIPP scores and gestational age, however, was not a pre-planned outcome, and therefore not as important to report (especially since no different from previous literature).  
2. Pg 17, 2nd para: I don't understand why called "bias" rather than "random error"-coders are blinded to treatment group, so where is the bias?  
3. Pg 18, last line: how do you "balance out by randomization" inactivity of drug-inactive placebo?  
4. Pg 21-reference opioids for PICC-include recent article in JAMA Feb 15 2006.  
5. Figure - use generic drug name.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions  
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field  
Quality of written English: Acceptable  
Statistical review: No  
Declaration of competing interests:  

Manufacturer of Ametop funded an immunization study to the reviewer within past 5 years.