Reviewer’s report

Title: Target disease-guided placebo control (TIGER) design -- A Novel Method for Acupuncture Clinical Trials

Version: 1 Date: 26 July 2013

Reviewer: liu baoyan

Reviewer’s report:

1. Reviewer’s report comments
1.1 A clearer hypothesis is needed in this paper.
This is a new thinking for the design of placebo intervention in Acupuncture trials, but the hypothesis seems not clear enough. It would be better if the author could explain and clarify the hypothesis of this new design.

1.2 Will the authors explain more about the “Placebo effect of acupuncture”? What do the authors think the “Placebo effect of acupuncture” is? The psychological effect is mentioned in this paper. Are there any other aspects included in the “Placebo effect of acupuncture”?

1.3 The inclusion criteria are not clear in the example of migraine. What kind of patients will be recruited in this example? Are there Patients with migraine only? How did the patients in group B accept the treatment if they are told that the therapy is not focusing on migraine?

1.4 In the example of migraine, could you please explain more on the difference between group A and B? How could you analysis this difference?

1.5 The flow chart seems too simple. A clearer flow chart should be made and explained.

1.6 In the paper, authors mentioned that the therapeutic effect is the combination of real effect and the psychological effect. Does this point of view have any reference supporting?

1.7 What about the application of this new design? Is there any limitation?

2. I would recommend asking the authors if it might be possible for a native-English speaking colleague to check the paper for clarity of language prior to resubmission.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

No to any. I declare that I have no competing interests.