Author's response to reviews

Title: Whole body vibration exercise for chronic low back pain: study protocol for a single blind randomised controlled trial

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

RE: Manuscript No. 5305365961113252; Title: Whole body vibration exercise for chronic low back pain: study protocol for a single blind randomised controlled trial.

We would like to thank *Trails* for giving us the opportunity to revise our manuscript. We thank the reviewers for their careful read and thoughtful comments on previous draft. We have carefully taken their comments into consideration in preparing our revision, which has resulted in a paper that is clearer, more compelling, and broader.

The following summarizes how we responded to reviewer comments.

Below is our response to their comments.

Thanks for all the help.

Best wishes,

Dr. Pei-Jie Chen

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Reviewer's report:
This is an interesting study, and the authors have done a good job of articulating the importance and novelty of the project. My comments are mostly grammatical. The following are specific areas to correct, but overall it would be helpful for the manuscript to have a careful grammatical review.

Response:
We want to begin by thanking Reviewer (Kelli Allen) for writing that “This is an interesting study, and the authors have done a good job of articulating the importance and novelty of the project” We also appreciated the constructive criticism and suggestion. We believe that the additional changes we have made in response to Kelli Allen’s comments have made this a significantly stronger manuscript. Below is our point-by-point response to the reviewer’s comments.

Minor Essential Revisions
Background
1. Sentence “Because chronic LBP…” has a grammatical issue.
Response: According to the reviewer’s suggestion, we revised the sentence in the revised manuscript.
2. Exercise therapy…. Change “on relieving” to “for reliving,” and consider changing “practice” to “guidelines,”
Response: We had revised it.
3. During the past decade….change “is becoming” to “has become.”
Response: We had revised it.
4. There are two reasons… it’s not quite clear what this means. Is this supposed to indicate there are two reasons the WBV may be useful for alleviating pain…?
Response: Thank you for pointing this out. We had revised the sentences. Changed to “There are two reasons WBV exercise may be useful for alleviating pain in patients with LBP.”
5. 4th paragraph, last sentence – grammatical issue 6. 5th paragraph, 1st sentence – consider changing “determination of the WBV…” to “that the determination of the effectiveness of WBV…”
Response: We had revised it.

Study Design
1. Combine 2nd and 3rd sentences
Response: We had combined two sentences.
2. 2nd paragraph, 1st sentence – correct “will accepted.”
   Response:
   We had revised it.

3. In the 2nd paragraph, it would be helpful to specify that the intervention is 3 months and then there is an inactive 3 month period. This is stated later in the manuscript but would be helpful if stated earlier, with the study design.
   Response:
   According to the reviewer’s suggestion, we had added “The total study period will be 6 months, which has a 3-month intervention and 3-month follow-up period with no intervention. The study will include assessments at the following time points: before intervention, at 3, 6 months.” in the final Study Design section.

Ethical considerations
1. Here and elsewhere in the document, do not begin a sentence with “And.”
   Response:
   We had revised it.

Interventions
1. 1st sentence should end at “3 months” or put an “and” before the next phrase.
   Response:
   We had revised it.

2. Change “cooling down” to “cool down.”
   Response:
   We had revised it.

3. What does “to eliminate any effect of vibrations” mean?
   Response:
   Thank you for pointing this out. We ask patients to remove their shoes, because shoes could absorb the vibration.

Outcome measures
1. Pain VAS – grammatical error in sentence beginning, “This uses”
   Response:
   We had revised it.

2. Back function “was” - change to “will be.” Also, throughout the manuscript, check verbs for tense and make consistent. Some are present, some past, and some are future tense.
   Response:
   According to the reviewer’s suggestion, we had revised it. And we also check
verbs for tense and make consistent throughout the manuscript.

3. What does “which references study of Fontana…” mean? Also a grammar error in this sentence.
   Response:
   Thank you for pointing this out. We had revised it.

4. What does “subjects are asked for prone position” mean? May be a grammar error.
   Response:
   Thank you for pointing this out. We had changed to “The subject will be asked to lie in prone position over a rigid surface”.

Discussion
1. 2nd sentence, change “dispute” to “disputed.”
   Response:
   We had revised it.

2. Grammar error in sentence beginning “And we think…”
   Response:
   We had revised it.

3. 2nd paragraph, what does “based on the point” mean, and in what way will this study “reduce other bias?”
   Response:
   Thank you for pointing this out. In our study, intervention group performs five movements with vibration, but the control group receives the five same movements without vibration at equal time. We think could reduce other bias compared to previous study. For example, subject-expectancy effect.