Reviewer's report

Title: Acupuncture in patients with cold hands sensation: study protocol for a randomized controlled pilot clinical trial

Version: 3 Date: 16 June 2014

Reviewer: Byung-Cheul Shin

Reviewer's report:

Dear authors

In this manuscript, the authors designed a pilot RCT of acupuncture in participants with cold hand sensation to obtain information for the design of a further full-scale trial. The aim of this study is this study will provide an indication of feasibility and a clinical foundation for a future large-scale trial. This topic is interesting. However, some points should be discussed.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. What is the exact definition of ‘cold hands sensation’? The fine definition is needed through whole manuscript.

2. Trials publishes study protocols for proposed or ongoing research, which should provide a detailed account of the hypothesis. Please check your research hypothesis.

3. For dose of medication, ‘20 mg three times daily’ in page 8 was shown, but ‘beraprost 30mg’ in figure 1 was also shown in page 21.

4. I wonder how many acupuncture points were used in this study? Seventeen acupoints were reported in page 8, however, 10 (5 bilateral points × 2) plus 1 (1 unilateral point × 1) did not make 17.

5. For the safety of acupuncture, ‘the safety of acupuncture will be determined by blood analysis’ seemed to me unreasonable. It makes no sense.

6. In the statistical analysis, nonparametric analysis might be expected to be used because of small sample. Please check your statistical analysis.

Quantitative data -> continuous data
Qualitative data -> categorical data

7. In the section of Discussion, please present the weakness or strength of your research.

8. Please check your report based on the proposed reporting guideline as CONSORT statement or STRICTA.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Choi[6], in page 4 -> Choi et al [6]

2. Please check your term of ‘patients’ in the manuscript. Those should be
changed to ‘subjects’ or ‘participants’.

Thank you

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.