Reviewer’s report

**Title:** The Effect on Knee Joint Load of Instruction in Analgesic Use Compared With Neuromuscular Exercise in Patients With Knee Osteoarthritis: Protocol for a randomized, single-blind, controlled trial (The EXERPHARMA trial)

**Version:** 2  
**Date:** 5 September 2014

**Reviewer:** Alexandre Terrier

**Reviewer’s report:**

The objective of this study is to investigate the efficacy of a neuromuscular training program versus a pharmacological treatment on knee biomechanics in patients with medial knee osteoarthritis.

The study question is a great interest, because of the importance of the pathology, and the potential drawback of the pharmacological treatment.

The methodology is reasonable the test the hypotheses, as the planned statistical analysis. The ethical aspects are clearly presented and addressed.

The paper is clearly written and the method is sufficiently described.

My only concern is the repeated use of the term “knee load” as a measure of the treatment effect, since no load (force) is actually measured. As explained in the discussion “The primary outcome of Knee Index is a surrogate measure for the combined external load across both medial and lateral knee compartments.”

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.