Reviewer’s report

Title: Ringer’s lactate but not hydroxyethyl starch prolongs the food intolerance time after major abdominal surgery

Version: 2

Date: 11 January 2015

Reviewer: Massimiliano Greco

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
For the moment i rise the following questions

1) The final paragraph of the introduction, after the research question "The present study explores whether starting the fluid therapy with starch or 18 Ringer’s lactate has an impact on postoperative GI recovery and surgical complications. " belong to the method section. Please remove it from the introduction

2) The research question reported in the second sentence of the introduction paragraph of the abstract differs from what is specified in the article introduction and methods, leading the reader to ask himself which of the two was the research question

3) The study is defined as " open-labelled clinical trial" in the introduction, while in the methods is specified that " The anaesthesia and research were managed by anaesthetists blinded to the preloading ". I cannot understand if this study was open or blinded,and then who was blinded to the research. Please specify (note that on the Chinese Clinical Trial registry this is also not specified.

4) Was the study randomised? if yes, please specify how randomisation was performed, who generated the random number sequence, and how allocation concealment was granted. Moreover, please specify why in the Registry you have stated that this study was not randomized. If it is not randomised, please remove any reference to randomisation concerning this article, and specify how patient were allocated to the different groups.

Minor concerns
Figure 1 is repeated 2 times in my pdf, please check that only a figure 1 is included.

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

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:**

I declare that I have no competing interest