Reviewer's report

Title: ASSESSING THE EFFICACY AND SAFETY OF MAGNESIUM SULFATE FOR MANAGEMENT OF AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM DYSREGULATION IN VIETNAMESE CHILDREN WITH SEVERE HAND FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

Version: 0 Date: 28 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Universiti Malaya Centre

Reviewer's report:

1. Study design was not clear

   a. Rationale: hypothesize early use of MgSO4 (when hypertension due to ANS dysregulation first becomes apparent), might control cardiovascular instability more effectively and prevent progression to severe disease. This refer to the use of MgSO4 in the earlier stage of the disease rather than the more severe form of HFMD. Therefore, the definition was not clear.

2. The study was designed to be a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial, but a retrospective "observational cohort" was also reviewed while waiting for ethical approval and funding. Both of these are indeed two separate studies, thus by combining these two together, it was quite confusing.

3. The sample was said to be 190, and this was mentioned only at the discussion section. However, at the end there was only 26 patient were recruited. The reason given was because of the drop of cases of HFMD after 2014, and this was described as "futile". The study power was too small to be able to draw any meaningful conclusion for this current RCT.

2. Study control was inappropriate with a placebo. This is a serious study bias, and it was ethically incorrect to randomize to a placebo when the hypertension needs an anti-hypertensive to optimize the blood pressure.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?  
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I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English  
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Needs some language corrections before being published

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