Reviewer’s report

Title: Effect of tendon vibration during wide-pulse neuromuscular electrical stimulation (NMES) on muscle force production in people with spinal cord injury

Version: 1 Date: 26 Nov 2017

Reviewer: John Malone

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made a good attempt to clarify reviewer concerns raised. This study highlights the ongoing issues of implementing NMES in clinical groups, namely, the large interindividual variability, and thus, the presence of "responders" and "non-responders". The sample size is also quite small, but I appreciate that recruitment of a specific cohort like this is likely to be quite challenging. In my opinion, whilst there are limitations of this study, overall it was a well conducted study with relevant findings to contribute to the current body of research.

Some specific comments:

Throughout this manuscript, many statements need to be more concise, as there are too many unnecessary words included, e.g., L96-97:

"Nonetheless, the use of NMES as a strength training modality has previously been utilised in research and has been shown to stimulate quadriceps muscle hypertrophy…” Suggest "Nonetheless, NMES as a strength training modality has previously been shown to stimulate quadriceps muscle hypertrophy…”

There are many examples like this throughout the manuscript, please carefully modify these.

L44-47: You use to the word 'speculated' for 'able-abodied pops', but 'lack of evidence' in SCI. Need to reword this, as 'speculate' does not provide 'evidence' for able-bodied.

L96-101: When NMES is used for both healthy and clinical populations for the purposes of increasing strength, it is generally used to levels of maximal tolerable intensity using tetanic protocols. Therefore the use of "strength training" vs "high-intensity strength training” is a bit problematic

L161-163: Thank you for clearing this up. However, instructing participants to produce approximately 50% MVE (and subsequently 30, 70 & 90% perceived maximal) would likely be very difficult for participants to gauge accurately and is likely to have had considerable intra-individual variability, especially at the lower intensities.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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