Reviewer’s report

Title: Posterior decompression and occipitocervical fixation followed by intraoperative vertebroplasty for metastatic involvement of the axis

Version: 0 Date: 19 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Michel Teuben

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for this interesting paper with some interesting conclusions. I have a few concerns however. I believe that the English is insufficient for a scientific paper. There are plenty of linguistic errors that affect readability. The paper urgently needs proof reading.

Regarding the methods section I suggest to describe the in- and exclusion criteria in a different way and to avoid double mentioning of criteria (the same criteria both as in and exclusion criteria). Besides I would like to be informed about how many patients with metastatic axis-tumours were excluded from this investigation during the study period. Furthermore I would like to ask the authors to include a statement about the ethical approval for this study.

Given the small sample size of the study I suggest not to show descriptive data as median(std) but rather as median (interquartile range).

As the primary outcomes of this study are pain-assessment scores I believe that it is important to document whether the included patients were still on pain medication on the moment the pain scores were determined or not. Otherwise this factor will be an important confounder. Moreover I would like to suggest to add the usage of pain killers (including daily dose) before and after the intervention as an additional outcome-parameter to this study. In addition, exact P-values are lacking and should be included.

Due to the small sample size of the study in my opinion figure 3 is superfluous.

In the discussion section I suggest to remove repeated presentation of findings and statements from the introduction.

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

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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