Reviewer's report


Version: 0 Date: 22 May 2018

Reviewer: Philippa Nicolson

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting manuscript which presents post-hoc analysis from a previously published RCT examining the efficacy of viscosupplementation in patients with knee osteoarthritis. While the manuscript is certainly of interest I have made a number of suggestions for consideration below:

A number of grammatical errors and issues with sentence structure are noted throughout the manuscript. Use of commas where stops should be used (such as in Abstract, Lines 50-52) and missing punctuation also noted.

Abstract
Given the nature of the analysis perhaps "exploratory" should be added to Line 11?

Line 37 - while most readers will be familiar with the scoring of the WOMAC function scale it may be clearer to include worse as well as higher in describing these baseline values

Introduction
The introduction would benefit from a stronger case for why this study is needed, why the results are important and how findings can be used.

Line 5 - "first line therapies" - such as?

Line 7 - add "a" - "though still a matter of controversy"

Lines 12-15 - it would be good to elaborate on this point "ranked it as the most effective treatment for knee OA" - for which outcomes?

Methods
Very clear and comprehensive!

Discussion
Would be good to clarify that the outcome is self-reported physical function (in first line)

Line 26 - importance of the x-ray grade for what?
A stronger case could be made for how these results should be used clinically.

Tables 1 and 2 - lacks labeling

Figures 1 and 2 are not clear to interpret - y-axis needs labeling

**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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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