Reviewer's report

Title: Efficacy and safety of combined treatment of miniscalpel acupuncture and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial.

Version: 0 Date: 14 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Pei Wang

Reviewer's report:

The article is interesting for the readers within such fields. But there are some problems.

1. Considering your manuscript is a protocol article, the title should illustrate it. Besides, I read the objective of the manuscript is to evaluate the efficacy and safety of the combined treatment in patients with chronic neck pain, but the title gave the expression to evaluate the efficacy and safety of the three interventions (miniscalpel acupuncture, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and combined treatment). Please clarify your final objective.

2. There is few words about the safety of the interventions in the main body of your manuscript, which looks contradiction with the title.

3. The sample size looks so small, and you expect a 20% drop out rate. Please, do as much as you can in order to prevent them. Besides, please provide the evidence of the minimum number recommended for pilot studies.

4. The exclusion criteria did not illustrate the patients who were taking the NSAIDs.

5. Endpoint evaluations included in the article are almost subjective ones, and some objective ones should be used to increase the strength of the results.

6. I understand that your primary outcome is the difference of VAS value of the nice pain before and after the treatment. I suggest give the computational formula.
**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

**Quality of figures**
All images and figures within the manuscript should be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation. No specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. If you have concerns about the veracity of the figures you should choose the first option below.

**Statistical review**
Is it essential that this manuscript is seen by an expert statistician? If so, please give your reasons in your report.

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