Author’s response to reviews

Title: Efficacy of acupuncture versus sham acupuncture for postprandial distress syndrome: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

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Response to reviewer comments:

Reviewer reports: Reviewer #1:

(1) Thank you for submitting this protocol of an RCT of acupuncture for PDS. There are a few amendments that need to be made before it can be published. Page 8 line 18-20 a brief
Answer: We thank the Reviewer for the question. We have given a brief description of where the sham acupuncture control has been used successfully in Chinese population. “The same control, shallow needling at non-acupoints, was adopted and is successful to mask Chinese participants with chronic severe functional constipation [20].”


(2) Please include some information on how the primary outcome elimination of the three cardinal symptoms will be assessed.

Answer: We thank the Reviewer for the question. We have described how the elimination rate will be assessed. “The elimination rate is based on the severity of dyspepsia symptoms [31] and is defined as the proportion of patients whose scores of postprandial fullness, upper abdominal bloating and early satiation all decline to 0 [26].”


(3) SPIRIT checklist. A statement about participant confidentiality needs to be included in the main body of the article. There is a statement on page 12 line 9-12 'The private information of patients....' however further clarification is needed as to what is meant by this statement.

Answer: We thank the Reviewer for the question. We have clarified further in the main body of the manuscript. “The private information of patients including name, telephone number, and ID number will be anonymous to ensure participant confidentiality.”

(4) Please include some information on item 5d in the main body of the text. 'Composition, roles, and responsibilities of the coordinating centre, steering committee, endpoint adjudication committee, data management team, and other individuals or groups overseeing the trial, if applicable (information on data management has already been included in the main body of the text).
Answer: We thank the Reviewer for the question. The roles and responsibilities of Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) have been listed on Page 12. We list the members of DSMB in Additional file 2.

(5) Although page numbers were given for the following items on the SPIRIT checklist I was unable to find details of the items on the page numbers listed. 11b, 17b, 18b, Item. Please can details of these items be added and the page numbers be updated in the SPIRIT diagram.

Answer: We thank the Reviewer for the question. We have detailed 11b item at Page 7, 17b item at Page 6, 18b item at Page 13.

(6) A '-' is given for item 6b on the SPIRIT checklist, however this information does seem to be included in the article. Please can you add the relevant page number.

Answer: We are sorry for this mistake. We have added the relevant page number about item 6b.

(7) There are some sentences where the English needs to be corrected. I have given some examples below however this is not exhaustive so please ensure that the entire article has been proof read and any errors in the English corrected. Page 6 line 20 '...who is not involved in the implement and statistical analysis of trial.' should read 'implementation' not 'implement'. Page 6 line 45 should be 3 years not 3 year. Page 6 line 48 -53 needs rewording. Page 8 lines 13-18 sentence beginning 'and this study will exclude...' needs rewording. Page 9 lines 12-42. The English in this paragraph needs to be corrected. Page 12 line 28-31 the word field could be removed.

Answer: We thank the Reviewer for the question. We have corrected the errors mentioned by the Reviewer and also sough help from a native English speaker.