Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluating the therapeutic efficacy of the Chinese herbal medicine, Yishen Tongbi decoction, in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis: Protocol for a randomized, controlled, noninferiority trial

Version: 0 Date: 04 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Zhengping Huang

Reviewer's report:

This pilot study aims to assess the efficacy of Yishen Tongbi in the treatment of RA, comparing the first-line drugs MTX. The manuscript is well written and the methodology is in accordance with the objectives proposed by the authors. The outcomes of this study may be important for our understanding of the role of Yishen Tongbi decoction in RA.

Some minor revisions:

1.For all patients, it is necessary to specify medications in use including NSAIDs and corticosteroid before and during the trial.

2.For the exclusion criteria, are there any requirements in the white blood cell count, level of alanine aminotransferase, aspartate minotransferase and serum creatinine since the drugs may cause liver or renal damage.

3.The definition of serious adverse event: RA also may cause disability and inability to work. How to distinguish from drug-related adverse events?

4.What's the limitation of this trial?

Level of interest
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