Reviewer’s report

Title: Acupuncture Treatment for Carotid Atherosclerotic Plaques: Study Protocol for a Pilot Randomized, Single Blinded, Controlled Clinical Trial

Version: 0 Date: 20 May 2020

Reviewer: Yu Cao

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript is generally well written and describes a study protocol for a randomized controlled trial of acupuncture treatment for carotid atherosclerotic plaques. There are several areas that need to be addressed.

1. Line 104, "another object is to establish acupuncture treatment for carotid atherosclerotic plaques", you may change another expression or delete it, since your sample size trial couldn't carry its point.

2. Line 163, you mentioned "four questions", there seems only three. Besides, If the results are concluded that the blinding is not sufficient, what will you deal with that? Because many Chinese patients have acupuncture experience, they are familiar with the needling sensation.

3. Table 1, there is a spelling mistake of "YINTANG", and what is the acupuncture manipulation for this acupoint, straightly or oblique insertion? If using oblique insertion, maybe the angle is 15 degree, will the pedestal affect the acupuncture manipulation for the true acupuncture group?

4. Line 467, there are several kinds of statins, why you choose atorvastatin? According to the clinical guideline?

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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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