Reviewer’s report

Title: The challenges of gout flare reporting: Mapping flares during a randomized controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 29 Nov 2018

Reviewer: Tristan Pascart

Reviewer's report:

I read with interest this study assessing the various methods of flare reporting and determine if these methods are able to capture the heterogeneity of flares. The main finding is the temporal variation of pain in gout that is not well captured so far in flare reporting. I would be very interested to know whether these discrepancies are seen late in the evolution of the disease, or also in early in the course of the disease. This would be of importance depending on the type of patients included in future trials (early in the course, gout arthopathy…)

Was there an attempt to adjust the assessment of the flare on on-going anti-inflammatory therapy? I find it difficult to compare flare definitions which include pain intensity assessment to self reports given that anti-inflammatory therapy will have an impact on pain intensity at least to some extent (and expectedly on the duration of the flare as well).

Results

Over the course of gout, flares to be prolonged with varied intensity. Did you study whether the discrepancies between flare assessment are related to disease duration? (e.g. reports of flares may be more homogenous in early diseases, where flares are probably more typical)

Page 8 line 27: 'median (range) percentage of days with Gaffo CART-defined flare was 4% (12-54%)'. The numbers don't seem to add up, I guess the median percentage is missing the second figure?

Table 2: I am very surprised by the poor correlation between CRP levels and all assessments of flares, do you have an explanation? I understand that CRP levels were examined monthly, but did you try to correlate CRP levels with reported flares contemporary of the biological assessment?
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:

Acceptable

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