

Reviewer's report

Title: Phellodendron and Citrus extracts benefit joint health in osteoarthritis patients: a pilot, double-blind, placebo-controlled study

Version: 1 **Date:** 22 June 2009

Reviewer: M Kikuchi

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

“Eighty (80) subjects were enrolled and 45 subjects completed the study,” and “No serious adverse events were reported.” In Table 2, “Reported no improvement in their condition” and “No reason given” were most of the reasons for dropping out. Please describe the reason of decrease of numerator; 80 to 45. Is it possible to make correct decision on benefit with high dropout rate?

- Minor Essential Revisions

Did subjects in this study have several infectious diseases? C-reactive protein increases in acute and chronic phases of infection, and liver function is crucial. If the authors considered the liver functions of the subjects, please indicate them.

Assessment of the Manuscript

1. The question posed by the authors is new and well defined.

The question posed by the authors is “to assess the potential benefit of a dietary supplement, NP 06-1, on joint health in overweight and normal weight adults diagnosed with osteoarthritis of the knee.”

2. The methods are appropriate and well described except several inclusion criteria. Age of 25 in osteoarthritis is younger as in common osteoarthritis. Background of these young patients should be described.

3. Why the authors adopted LAI questionnaire and Likert scale, what the advantage of using these assessment tools is, should be concisely noted.

4. Pathogenesis of the obesity in this study should be concisely described.

5. (1) In Discussion section, why may the decreases in CRP in this study have been influenced by loss in body weight? If possible, is this product applicable to the treatment of metabolic syndrome relating pleotropic effect?

(2) Author should describe the methods used for calculation of P values, e.g. Mann-Whitney's U test.

6. The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found.

7. Footnotes of Table 1 to 3 about groups# should be reconsidered. Spelling mistakes are found in Tables.

Decision on statistical test in the study will be held for further consideration.

Authors should describe the methods used for P-value. The methods adopted should be determined before start of the study. Comparison (calculation of P value) should be adequately done because dropout rate was high.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.