

## Letter to the Editor

### Authors' response

The potential for using topical NSAIDs or topical capsaicin was included in a single statement in recommendation 15 simply in order to try and minimise the number of separate statements of recommendation. No attempt was made to amalgamate evidence relating to these very different modalities of treatment. The best available evidence for safety and efficacy for each was assessed and discussed separately in the published recommendations. As evidence for efficacy for both modalities was supported by a systematic review the Level of Evidence (LoE) for both was appropriately graded 1a. This does not imply that the strength or quality of evidence for each modality of treatment is the same. LoE must not be confused with the Strength of Recommendation (SOR), which was based on the votes of the guideline development group after combining consideration of the best available evidence with their own expertise,

for the specifically worded statement relating to both modalities of topical therapy contained in recommendation 15. In the absence of RCTs with head to head comparisons no separate recommendation was made for any individual topical NSAID. RCTs and meta-analyses published after January 31st 2006 are currently being reviewed and will be considered when the OARS I recommendations are updated and revised.

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