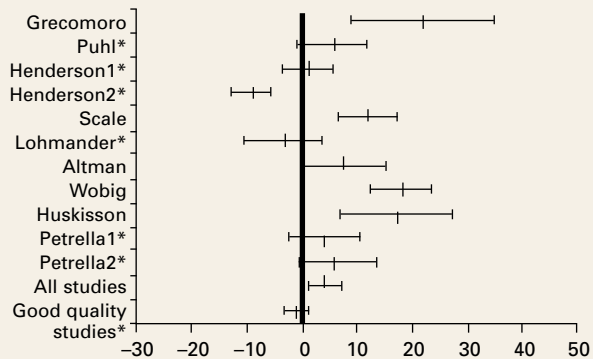


Mean differences between treatment and placebo groups of change from baseline on pain (measured with a 100-mm visual analog scale)

2A

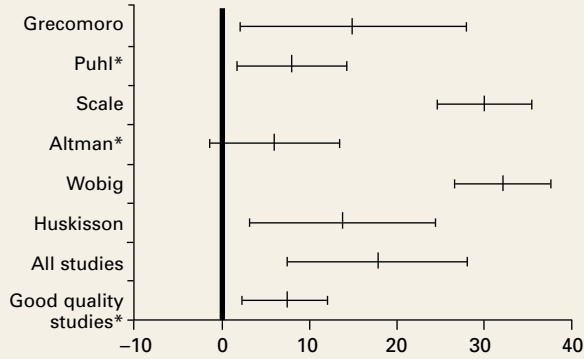
Mean differences between treatment and placebo groups (week 1)



Test for heterogeneity: all studies, $Q=121.7$ on 10 degrees of freedom ($P<.001$); good-quality studies, $Q=34.7$ on 6 degrees of freedom ($P<.001$).

2B

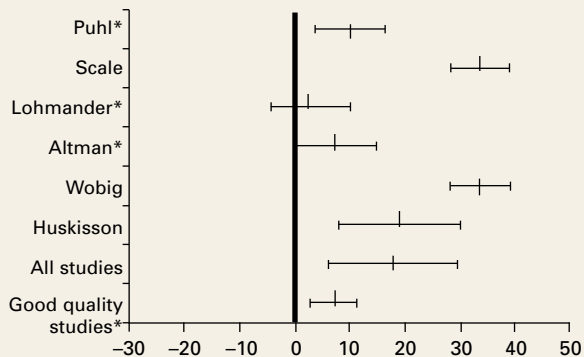
Mean differences between treatment and placebo groups (weeks 5–7)



Test for heterogeneity: all studies, $Q=60.6$ on 5 degrees of freedom ($P<.001$); good-quality studies, $Q=0.2$ on 1 degrees of freedom ($P=.688$).

2C

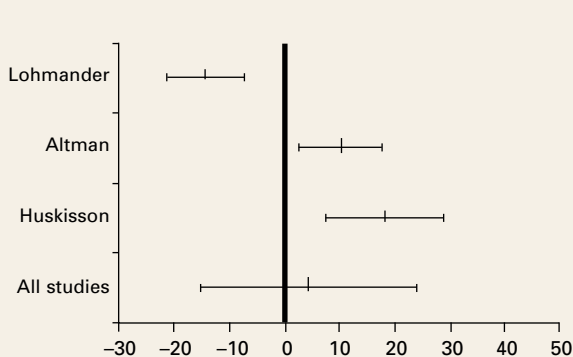
Mean differences between treatment and placebo groups (weeks 8–12)



Test for heterogeneity: all studies, $Q=92.3$ on 5 degrees of freedom ($P<.001$); good-quality studies, $Q=2.2$ on 2 degrees of freedom ($P=.332$).

2D

Mean differences between treatment and placebo groups (weeks 15–22)



Test for heterogeneity: all studies, $Q=33.6$ on 2 degrees of freedom ($P<.001$). All studies of good quality.

Short vertical lines indicate the point estimates; horizontal lines depict the 95% confidence intervals. Summary 1 was calculated with all the trials, and summary 2 was calculated only with trials considered of good quality (marked with an asterisk*). Mean differences between groups of treatment equal to 0 indicate no change, higher than 0 indicate a beneficial effect of viscosupplementation therapy on pain relief on VAS and lower than 0 indicate a prejudicial effect of viscosupplementation therapy on pain relief on VAS. Summary estimates of the mean difference between groups of treatment was calculated using DerSimonian and Laird random-effects model.