Arden NK, et al. A randomized saline-controlled trial of NASHA hyaluronic acid for knee osteoarthritis. Current Medical Research & Opinion 2014;30:279–286.

Design: Randomized clinical trial

Study question: In patients with knee osteoarthritis (OA), is NASHA hyaluronic acid more effective than saline in improving function and relieving pain?

Reasons not to cite as evidence:

- The study is primarily a short-term safety and efficacy study which did not meet its primary endpoint, but in which a post-hoc subgroup analysis of patients without clinical effusion in the study knee at baseline showed a significantly higher 6 week responder rate with NASHA than with saline
- A post-hoc subgroup analysis of any endpoint is suspect because it is a form of selective outcome reporting, which is identified by the Cochrane Collaboration and other researchers as imposing a high risk of bias
- The superiority of this form of hyaluronic acid over saline even in the short term is not demonstrated in any way