

Supplementary Table 1. Quality assessment of the included studies (NA: Not available).

Author	Publication in a peer-reviewed journal	Animal temperature control	Randomization of treatment or control assignment	Allocation concealment	Blinded assessment of outcome	Animal anesthetics without marked intrinsic properties	Sample size calculation	Compliance with regulatory requirements	Statement of possible conflict of interest	Total score
Nagae et al.	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	3
Sawamura et al.	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	3
Chen et al.	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	1	NA	1	1	3
Gullung et al.	1	NA	1	NA	1	1	NA	1	NA	5
Hu et al.	1	NA	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	5
Obata et al.	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	3
Meng et al.	1	NA	1	NA	1	1	NA	1	NA	5
Gui et al.	1	NA	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	4
Gui et al.	1	NA	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	4
Wang et al.	1	NA	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	4
Yang et al.	1	NA	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	NA	4

Forest plots for the main analysis of disc height (A), T2 weighted MRI (B), histological degeneration grade (C) and collagen II expression (D.)

