**Additional file 2** List of excluded articles and reasons

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| **Authors (date)** | **Imaging modality** | **Grounds for exclusion**  |
| Abdel-Wahab et al (2008) | Ultrasound/ MRI | Did not exclude participants with endocrine conditions.  |
| Amis et al (1988) | Radiograph  | No comparison to an asymptomatic control group. |
| Chen et al (2012) | Ultrasound | Unable to access comparative data.  |
| Gamba et al (2018) | Ultrasound/MRI | No comparison to an asymptomatic control group. |
| Granado et al (2019) | Ultrasound  | Similar data reported in another article (Granado et al 2018). |
| Hall et all (1996) | MRI | Did not exclude participants with endocrine conditions. |
| Johal & Milner | Radiograph  | Unable to ascertain whether control group was asymptomatic of PHP. |
| Li et al (2018) | Ultrasound  | Non-English language.  |
| O’Duffy etal (1998)  | Scintigraphy  | Did not exclude participants with endocrine conditions. |
| Ribeiro et al (2011)  | Digital photography  | Not a medical imaging study. |
| Vohra et al (2002) | Ultrasound  | Comparison of asymptomatic and symptomatic bands of the plantar fascia in participants with PHP, rather than comparison to an asymptomatic control group. |
| Wainwright et al (1995) | Radiograph  | Unable to ascertain whether control group was asymptomatic of PHP. |
| Wearing et al (2004) | Ultrasound | Similar data reported in another article (Wearing et al 2007) .  |
| Williams et al (1987) | Radiograph/ Scintigraphy | Radiograph data excluded only. Unable to ascertain whether radiograph control group was asymptomatic of PHP. Scintigraphy data was included. |
| Zhang et al (2014) | 2014 | Non-English language.  |