Reviewer's report

Title: A Common Genetic Factor Underlies Hypertension and other Cardiovascular Disorders

Version: 1 Date: 1 April 2004

Reviewer: Jane Olson

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The paper should include a table of descriptive statistics of the phenotypes.

Some discussion of potential reporting bias, particularly with respect to the reporting of more than one condition. Since the crux of the paper is the correlations among the phenotypes, any bias toward increased reporting of conditions in people who already have one condition would bias estimates of the correlations. It seems likely that those with one condition would be more likely to be aware of and report a second condition (if it exists) or be more quickly diagnosed than one who is otherwise healthy.

For the discussion, is there other genetic evidence from the literature that supports your conclusion, such as from genome scans or candidate gene association studies. Or do such studies suggest no relationship? Some discussion of the literature in support of or opposed to your hypothesis would be helpful.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

I would suggest including BMI as a covariate, or more to the point, a comparison of analyses with and without adjusting for BMI. Since weight is one factor that may underlie more than one of these phenotypes, it should be relatively easy to determine if the correlations disappear after this adjustment (and if so, suggesting that these effects are mediated through BMI).

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
None.