Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparison of hemodynamic and nutritional parameters between older persons practitioner of physical activity nonsmokers and ex-smokers.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Brazil, July 23, 2010.

To the editors of the journal BMC Geriatrics

MS:1398899350334917

Title: Comparison of hemodynamic and nutritional parameters between older persons practicing regular physical activity, nonsmokers and ex-smokers.

All required corrections and reviews has been realized as possible, therefore they were compromised because we have had contacted the editors asking for more explanations on July 7th of 2010, and had no reply. I would like to make clear some doubts of the correction of the article.

I received the first contact about the corrections of the article on May 10th, 2010, in which was the corrections of two reviewers (the e-mail is attached). However, in the e-mail that I received on July sixth, 2010, the comments of these reviewers seems to be exchanged. For example, the reviewer which, on the first contact affirmed that there was no necessity of a statistical review, in the second contact showed an opposite view.

So, I would like to know if it’s possible the comments of the reviewers were exchanged. If it’s positive, I need to know how I should proceed, because a mistake like this could compromise my review and the justifications received from the reviewers.

Why we had no answer we were unable to do something about it and only sent the corrections to the right reviewers.

I’m waiting for your answer.

I appreciate in advance for your attention.

Sincerely,

Authors
Dear Dr Francisco,

Please accept my apologies for the delay in contacting you with our initial editorial decision. We experienced difficulties in securing a second referee to assess your article and we are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused. Your manuscript has now been peer reviewed and the comments are pasted at the foot of this mail.

We would be grateful if you could address the comments in a revised manuscript and provide a cover letter giving a point-by-point response to the concerns. You may wish to highlight (with 'tracked changes'/coloured/underlines/highlighted text) all changes made when revising the manuscript to make it easier for the Editors to give you a prompt decision on your manuscript.

EDITORIAL REQUESTS:

We recommend that you copyedit the paper to improve the style of written English. If this is not possible, you may need to use a professional copyediting service. Examples are those provided by the Manuscript Presentation Service (www.biomedes.co.uk), International Science Editing (http://www.internationalscienceediting.com/) and English Manager Science Editing (http://www.sciencemanager.com/). BioMed Central has no first-hand experience of these companies and can take no responsibility for the quality of their service.

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Please list the source(s) of funding for the study, for each author, and for the manuscript preparation in the acknowledgements section. Authors must describe the role of the funding body, if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; and in the decision to submit the manuscript for publication.
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We look forward to receiving your revised manuscript by 31 May 2010. If you imagine that it will 
take longer to prepare please give us some estimate of when we can expect it.

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Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any problems or questions regarding your 
manuscript.

With best wishes,
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Reviewer 1 - HC Hsu
Reviewer's report - This study used a retrospective design to see the exercise program effect to 
the non-smokers and ex-smokers, and four evaluations of the health parameters were 
conducted during a year. An intervention design and prospective study needs a lot of effort to 
input, and the data would be very valuable. However, the statistics used in this study was not 
appropriately conducted to analyze the findings. Some comments and suggestions are as 
follows, and I hope this would be helpful for the authors.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The characteristics of the two groups at the beginning were not the same (at least HR was 
significantly different), and the gender composition of two groups are not the same. It is difficult 
to tell if the difference was from the smoking status or from other differences at the baseline. It
would be better if the authors may control for other variables by statistics when comparing the two groups, such as multi-variate regression.

2. The authors only compared the two groups at the same stage, but did not compare the change across time within a group. The effect of exercise program should be determined first, then the difference between two groups are compared. The exercise program may bring different effect for two groups. The exercise effect is possibly more significant of HR in the nonsmokers than in the ex-smokers; SBP may be reduced more in ex-smokers than non-smokers. However, the change within a group was not shown by the statistics used in this manuscript. In addition, the change during four evaluations in a year may be related to the aging effect or related to the exercise cumulative effect, but it is impossible to tell without the control group in the study design. I also suggest this can be added in the limitation.

Minor Essential Revisions

3. In Table 1, all the comma (,) should be replaced by dot (.).

Discretionary Revisions

4. In this study, only the samples who finished the exercise program for 12 months and four evaluations were included. There were no control groups to contrast the effect of participation to this program, and probably those dropped up of the program were more likely to be frail, which may cause some bias of the results. I suggest the authors should add this limitation and discuss the possible biased direction of the results in the Discussion section.

5. Four evaluations of the indicators were conducted. I'm not sure if the initial evaluation was before the exercise program, or it was conducted after the program. This baseline data would be the basic difference between two groups. Please add details about the evaluation time.

6. Discussion of the results should be revised if further statistics is conducted.

Level of interest An article of limited interest
Quality of written English Acceptable
Statistical review Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

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Reviewer 2 - C Chambliss

Reviewer's report - This is an interesting paper. Last sentence of abstract and end of conclusion section are not supported by your data. From my reading these findings suggest that exercise
may be more beneficial to HR among those without a history of smoking, while more useful in affected VO2 for former smokers after one year.

There are some language/typo problems that need to be corrected (t-test, not T-test..., nutritioal...). In the intragroup analysis, this study verified a significant increase in VO2 for the Ex-smoker Group after one year of activities in the program. The Nonsmoker Group did not show the same behavior (change last word...VO2 is not a behavior).

Serious Lang problems in the method section: Was considered a regular physical exercise those practiced for tree times a week. To select elderly individuals practitioner of regular physical exercise a convenience sample was selected among the participants of the Adult Revitalization Program. This program is maintained by UFSCar in partnership with the Municipality of São Carlos and seeks to implement the assistance to the elderly, through the maintenance of physical ability, socialization and quality of life. The physical exercise session of the Revitalization Program were held three times a week, with a duration of 55 minutes, in groups from 20 to 30 elderly people. The sessions are given by physical educators and include stretching practice, aerobic conditioning, muscle strength training, coordination activities, balance, respiratory and relaxation exercises. Those who attended less than 75% of the program sessions, which did not participated of the program for 12 consecutive months and not appeared in the four annual evaluations were excluded. The elderly who meets the criteria were selected (n=40) and divided into two groups paired by age, with reference to their smoking history (Nonsmoker Group and Exsmoker Group), with 20 individuals in each group.

Level of interest An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

To submit your revised manuscript

When you have revised your manuscript in light of the reviewer's comments and made any required changes to the format of your paper, please upload the revised version by following these instructions:

1. Go to http://www.biomedcentral.com/manuscript/login/man.asp?txt_nav=man&txt_man_id=1398899350334917 and log on with your email address and password.
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