Author's response to reviews

Title: A pooling-based genome-wide analysis identifies new potential candidate genes for atopy in the European Community Respiratory Health Survey (ECRHS)

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Dear Editor

Thanks to give us the opportunity to publish our work in BMC Medical Genetics. We modified the manuscript according to the journal style requirements and according to the comments of referees.

1. To be in agreement with the journal style, we modified the following points in the new version of the manuscript and additional file:

   - We introduced a 'Methods' section in the abstract
   - The different sections have been put in the appropriate order
   - A competing financial interest declaration has been included (page 15)
   - Information about ethical approval and patient consent has been included at the end of methods (page 8)

2. We modified the manuscript according to the comments of the second referee:

   - Comment 1). The results section of the abstract should give more emphasis on the association with SGK493 (see last sentence of 1st paragraph of the discussion).

   - Response to Comment 1): Results section of the abstract has been modified, giving more importance to SGK493 results:

   “Homo sapiens protein kinase-like protein SgK493 (SGK493) was found to be associated with atopy. To lesser extent mitogen-activated protein kinase 5
(MAP3K5), collagen type XVIII alpha 1 (COL18A1) and collagen type XXIX alpha 1 (COL29A1) were also found to be associated with atopy. Functional evidences points out a role for MAP3K5, COL18A1 and COL29A1 but the function of SGK493 is unknown.”

- Comment 2). The Odds-ratio and confidence interval for the most significant SGK493 SNP (rs4952590) might be indicated in the text.

- Response to Comment 2): We introduced a sentence in Results (page 10, lines 7-10) with the odds ratios and confidence intervals:

“This variant was associated with a reduction in risk of atopy in both samples (odds ratio (OR) = 0.18, 95% confidence interval (CI) 0.07-0.47 for pooling sample and OR = 0.52, 95%CI 0.35-0.79 for replication sample).”