Author's response to reviews

Title: Association study of genetic variants of pro-inflammatory chemokine and cytokine genes in systemic lupus erythematosus

Authors:

Elena E Sanchez (elena@ipb.csic.es)
Jose Mario JM Sabio (masabio@terra.es)
Jose Luis JL Callejas (jlcallejas@hotmail.com)
Enrique E De Ramon (ederamont@telefonica.net)
Rosa R Garcia-Portales (rosagaport@hotmail.com)
Francisco J FJ Garcia-Hernandez (fjgarciaperan@terra.es)
Maria Francisca MF Gonzalez-Escribano (mariaf.gonzalez.sspa@juntadeandalucia.es)
Javier J Martin (martin@ipb.csic.es)
Bobby PC BPC Koeleman (b.p.c.koeleman@med.uu.nl)

Version: 3 Date: 15 March 2006

Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the manuscript entitled "Association study of genetic variants of pro-inflammatory chemokine and cytokine genes in systemic lupus erythematosus", that we would like to submit for publication in the Research Article section, of BMC Medical Genetics.

In this work, for the first time we have studied the functional genetics variants of RANTES, IL-8, MCP-1 and IL-1a with regard to susceptibility or severity of systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). We did not observed statistically significant difference in the distribution of allele or genotype frequencies of any of the polymorphisms tested between SLE patients and healthy controls, not replicating the previously reported association with SLE in different ethnic populations. In addition, no association were found in the distribution of these polymorphisms with regard to SLE clinical manifestations. These results suggest that the tested functional variation of RANTES, IL-8, IL-1a, and MCP-1 genes do not confer a relevant role in the susceptibility or severity of SLE in the Spanish population.

It is generally accepted that in the gene association field one of the reasons for the lack of replication across different ethnic/racial subgroup, may is due to, different background genes and/or gene-environment interactions. Therefore, publication of non-significant results are of interest when the sample size, power calculation, methodology and conclusions reached are appropriate. In addition, negative results are necessary for outweigh positive results, since, many of the positive results that have been published may be errors.

The manuscript has not been submitted and is not simultaneously being submitted elsewhere, and no portion of the data has been or will be published in proceedings or transactions of meetings or symposium volumes.
The authors declare no conflict of interest.
We believe that our findings are important enough to justify publication in your prestigious journal.
Thank you for your consideration. We are looking forward to hearing from you.
Sincerely yours,

Javier Martin MD, PhD
Instituto de Parasitología y Biomedicina
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas
Parque Tecnológico de Ciencias de la Salud
Avda. Conocimiento s/n
18100 Armilla, Granada, Spain
Tel. +34 958 181 669
Fax. +34 958 181 632
e- mail: martin@ipb.csic.es