Author's response to reviews

Title: Design Considerations in a Study of Linkage for Susceptibility Loci in Cancer

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Modern approaches to identifying new genes associated with disease allow very fine analysis of association and can be performed in population based case-control studies. However, the sibpair design is still valuable because it requires few assumptions other than acceptably high penetrance to identify genetic loci. We conducted simulation studies to assess the impact of design factors on relative efficiency for a linkage study of colorectal cancer. We present an extensive analysis of these design issues with useful results relating to recruitment of subjects and analysis of the data. We also provide a thoughtful review of the issues in the design of sibpair studies. Our study will be of interest in the design of studies for complex diseases and will enlighten the BMC Medical Genetics audience. We originally sent this paper to BMC Genetics and were guided to send it instead to BMC Medical Genetics. We have only made minor format changes (to section titles etc) to align with BMC Medical Genetics guidelines. The authors have no conflict of interest in the publication of this paper. Thank you for consideration of our work.

Sincerely,

Dianne M. Finkelstein, PhD