Author's response to reviews

Title: Inorganic phosphate and the risk of cancer in the Swedish AMORIS study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
The Biomed Central Editorial Team


Thank you for consideration of our manuscript for publication in your journal.

We have reviewed the above manuscript according to your editor’s comments.

Editor’s comment:
Thank you for your detailed and clear response to the reviewer’s comments. The revisions have clarified and thus strengthened the presentation of your study and its results. However, in my review of your revised manuscript, I found several instances for changes that were requested but not implemented, yet your response provides no reason for not making the suggested modifications. The additional changes to the text based on your responses to the reviewer’s comments are provided below. I would appreciate seeing these few changes made to the manuscript.

1- The author’s provide a clear explanation of lung disease per the Reviewer’s request. So that this important information is available to all readers please add this to the text of the methods section where you first mention that you obtained history of diabetes and lung disease. The codes for lung disease also should be added to the footnote of table 1.
   • We have now added the explanation in the methods and also in the footnote of Table 1.

2- Questions pertaining to detail for some types of cancers also were addressed in the authors’ response. However for clarity, it would be helpful to include in the methods section that the ICD-7 classification was used for cancer coding and that the specific coding detail for each cancer is presented in tables 3 and 4.
   • Thank you. We have added the suggested details in the methods. However we did not particularly mention Table 3 and 4 in the methods since it might change the sequence of the tables mentioned in the text.

3- Use of extracellular Pi was corrected in the abstract but also should be corrected in the discussion text on pages 7, 8.
   • Thank you. This has now been done.
4- The requested major compulsory revision to explain the stability of Pi measures over time was nicely explained in the authors’ response but I could not find this information in the revised manuscript. Please include this information in the discussion or in the limitations.
   • We have now added this part in the limitation of the study.

5- One reviewer noted the cursory acknowledgement for the lack of data for confounders such as smoking and alcohol. Rather than merely acknowledging this drawback by stating the adjustment for history of lung disease, please state how the lack of this direct information and the use of a crude proxy factor may have influenced your findings. This is critical for the inferences and interpretation of the study results. You should note in your conclusion as well that future studies should assess the impact of confounding and effect modification that were not possible in these analyses.
   • We have now added a statement that some confounding effect by smoking may remain, and also added the suggestion on future studies in the conclusion.