Reviewer’s report

Title: Effects of leucine supplemented diet on intestinal absorption in tumor bearing pregnant rats.

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Reviewer: Dr Peter Taylor

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Accept after discretionary revisions

The authors have addressed several of my queries. Nevertheless the following items remain to be resolved:-

COMPULSORY REVISION 1. Statements in Abstract relating to absorption data need correcting:- i.e. Met absorption was NOT increased in WN group; WL group does NOT have a higher rate of Leu absorption than WN group.

COMPULSORY REVISION 4. Table 1. Body weight gain in pregnant animals (approx 44%) is surprisingly high if fetal weight has already been subtracted. This needs to be commented on.

COMPULSORY REVISION 6. Regarding my comment that it is extremely important to establish whether changes in gut mucosal mass / protein content have occurred which may account for some underlying changes in absorption:- I accept the authors response but would like to see the essence of that response incorporated into the manuscript.

COMPULSORY REVISION 7.
A major effect of Leu supplementation is to prevent experimental hypoglycaemia (Table 1) and Leu does not appear to protect the fetus from growth retardation when a tumour is present. These points need to be given some prominence in the Discussion section.

There are also two sentences in Portugese within the modified Discussion which should be deleted.

Competing interests:

None declared.