Author's response to reviews

Title: Overweight and obesity in children with congenital heart disease: combination of risks for the future?

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Ms Olino

Journal Editorial Office
BioMed Central

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for your consideration of our Manuscript entitled “Dietary habits and risk factors associated with overweight in children with congenital heart disease: combination of risks for the future? (MS: 5970480931204443) for publication in BMC Pediatrics.

We are grateful for the reviewers’ positive evaluation and have addressed each of their comments. We feel that the reviewers’ suggestions have improved considerably our work. We have incorporated them into the text, in red font, including new data, as solicited.

Please find our responses to each reviewer’s comments below.

Sincerely yours,

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Reviewer #1:

Comment: Minor essential revisions:
I have reviewed the manuscript entitled "Dietary habits and risk factors associated with overweight in children with congenital heart disease: combination of risks for the future?". This is a nice study of a relatively large group of pts with CHD assessing the prevalence of overweight and the potential risk factor associated with obesity. There are several grammatical errors likely related to English not being the authors first language that will need to be addressed.

Answer:
We are very grateful for your assistance. We appreciate your commentaries and suggestions. We know you spent time analyzing our manuscript and we sought to correct the grammatical errors and to clarify the text, in accordance to your suggestions. The new version of the manuscript has these changes highlighted in red font.

Comment: In addition, the authors speak about blood pressure measurements and discuss it in the limitations sections but the result of BP is only mentioned in a table. With such limitations it should perhaps be taken out.

Answer:
We agree with the reviewer and have opted for withdrawing the BP measurements from the manuscript, given these limitations.

Comment: It would be interesting to know if particular groups of cardiac defects had higher prevalence of overweight.
Answer:

We thank the reviewer for this suggestion to improve our manuscript. We have included this data in a new table (Table 2), in red font, and in a new paragraph in page 6.

Comment: Did the authors consider whether the pts were exercise restricted? It would be worth adding this information since this is one of their hypotheses.

Answer:

We added to the manuscript data about physical activity according to the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ) short version. Most patients reported no medical restrictions, but families also reported to be afraid of sudden events during exertion, spontaneously restricting their children. We are currently studying the exact physicians recommendations comparing to actual physical activity in order to possibly present these data with more accuracy in another paper.

Reviewer #2:

Comment: The dietary measure is not clear and I would presume not validated, since you don’t mention that. I would delete part about diet, due to lack of validity of that instrument.

Answer:

We agree with the reviewer and have opted for withdrawing the dietary data from the manuscript, given these limitations.

Comment: It is unclear which risk factor you are basing power on

Answer:

Thank you for your comment, we modified the sentence to clarify that sample size was estimated based on the prevalence of obesity.
Comment: 3. Are the data sound? See above. Page 6 – where did you express BMI %ile, wt, ht, age, SBP, DBP as means and standard deviations – would not be valid (expect for age) in a population with ages 2-18 years anyway.

Answer:

We eliminate the description of the statistical method for these variables, as suggested, since they were not used in the present results.

Comment: Page 6 line 130 – for categorical variables – how are dyslipidemia, glucose, BMI percentile categorical – they should all be renamed to categorical names.

Answer:

Thank you very much for your suggestion. We modified the text, as suggested, and the new sentence is in red font (page 6, paragraph 1).

Comment: · Page 6, line 147-8 – do you mean father, mother, either? Else the both should be no greater than the smallest of the mother/father percentiles.

Answer:

We agree with the reviewer and have modified the manuscript accordingly.

Comment: Table 3 – I don’t understand the 1st degree relative with obesity grouping -- if either parent is obese, wouldn’t all those children be a YES to this designation?

Answer:

We agree with the reviewer, these data were less clear. We meant to present excess weight of mothers and fathers separately, but since this information overlaps with “obesity in first degree relative”, we removed it from Table 3.
Comment: 8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? -- might change the title if the dietary information is removed.

Answer:

We thank the reviewer for this comment. The new title, as suggested, is: “Overweight and obesity in children with congenital heart disease: combination of risks for the future?”

Comment: The first paragraph is confusing, as not clear that all these studies have the same definition and the one you are using.

Answer:

We modified the paragraph, as suggested, and the new sentence is in red font.

Comment: Line 66 page 1 – this sentence is not clear…. The association between health behavior of family and child is known. I doubt the studies show directionality or the behaviors. I would guess parental habit – transferred down to child (particularly since the parents are obese).

Answer:

We appreciate the criticism and have modified the text according to the suggestion. The new paragraph is in red font.

Comment: Page 5, fasting glucose -- missing the >; CRP missing the >.

Answer:

We are sorry for the missing symbols and corrected them in the text.

Comment: Tables – Table 4 has Underweight/normal wt groups and table 5 has eutrophic group. I would suggest you use the same names and groups split for all between –group tables.

Answer:
We appreciate the criticism and have modified the text and tables according to the reviewer’s suggestion.

Comment: Page 8, lines 196-197 – the percentiles are too exacting – but I think you should cut this entire paragraph anyway.

Answer:

We appreciate the criticism and have withdrawn this paragraph.

Comment: Page 9 line 206 – should be occurs.

Answer:

We are sorry for the mistake and corrected it in the text.

Comment: Page 10 lines 226 and 235 – typos ; lines 227 – “fetal mentalism” -- do you mean fetal development (fetal cognitive development)

Answer:

“Fetal metabolism” was incorrectly typed as “Fetal mentalism”. We are very sorry for the typos and thank you for the detailed revision. The corrected versions are in red font in the manuscript.