Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of the metabolic syndrome and its components in Northwest Russia: the Arkhangelsk study

Version: 1 Date: 26 February 2009

Reviewer: Maarit Valtonen

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. In this manuscript the authors describe the prevalence of the metabolic syndrome and its components in an urban Russian population. The prevalence among Russian men is considerably lower than among European and North-American men. The study is scientifically sound and it brings new information in the field. The main strength of this study is the relatively large size. The conclusion made by the authors regarding the role of MetS in the CVD deaths in Russian men is relevant. The authors mentioned several other possible explanations for the high CVD mortality. They did not mention a possible role of the relatively short life expectancy among men in Russia explaining the main conclusion. Is there any data available to address this question?

2. Methods, line 1. Typo: in 2000 a town of...

3. Discussion, reference 31: the study population came from Savo, which is not Karelia. It is geographically far from Arkhangelsk. Social conditions and genetics are very different. Therefore I think the comparison is too strong. Recent data from Finland suggests markedly higher current prevalence of MetS reflecting social and economical changes in the country.

Discretionary Revisions:
1. Use of subtitles in methods and results sections would make it easier for a reader to follow the text.

2. The authors could consider explaining the laboratory measurements used in the study in the method section rather than in the discussion.

3. I would recommend beginning the discussion by pointing out the main finding of the study to make it more apparent for a reader.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest.