Reviewer's report

Title: Health-related quality of life is not impaired in children with undetected as well as diagnosed celiac disease: a large population based cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Carlo Catassi

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting paper reporting on the health-related quality of life (HRQoL) in children with undetected as well as diagnosed celiac disease, as compared with health controls. Self-reported HRQoL was measured using Kidscreen, a generic 52 items instrument with proven reliability and validity. Children with undetected celiac disease (n=238) reported similar HRQoL as children without celiac disease (n=12 037) (83.0±11.0 vs. 82.5±11.3, P=0.51), and also similar HRQoL (82.2±12.2, P=0.28) to that of children with diagnosed celiac disease (n=90), of whom 92% were compliant to treatment. Having undetected celiac disease did not increase the odds of low overall HRQoL, independent of sex, area of residence, study year and occurrence of gastrointestinal symptoms (adjusted odds ratio 0.77, 95% CI 0.54-1.10). Authors conclude that children with celiac disease, both untreated and diagnosed, perceive their HRQoL as unimpaired by their disease.

This study is well-designed, performed and presented. The research group is one of the world leaders in the area of the epidemiology of celiac disease. The results are relevant to the debate on how to investigate the celiac iceberg, i.e. by case-finding or mass screening.

I have just a couple of minor criticisms (minor essential):

1. Page 2 line 11 (abstract): rephrase as follows: when anti-TTG antibodies were elevated,...
2. Page 6, lines 12-13 and 21: authors should specify the anti-transglutaminase antibody level used for deciding further investigation (small intestinal biopsy).

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests