Reviewer's report

Title: Overweight, physical activity, tobacco and alcohol consumption in a cross-sectional random sample of German adults

Version: 1 Date: 17 March 2006

Reviewer: Anthony Kafatos

Reviewer's report:

General
A large study with interesting results.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
There are no clear targets. There are many examinations but there has been no attempt to correlate them. For example, the liver ultrasound findings have not been correlated to alcohol consumption, obesity or hepatitis. Serum lipoproteins have not been correlated to physical activity, smoking, obesity or dietary intake.
The population sample (4000) seems to be very high in relation to the reference population (12475). Did the authors perform any power calculations to estimate the sample size? It is also unclear what the terms "non-selected" and "collective mean. There is no explanation in the Methods section.
It is stated that the questionnaires included questions on nutrition but no data are presented. There has been no attempt to validate the data-questionnaires on physical activity and alcohol consumption. Alcohol consumption is usually under-reported. The liver enzyme ?-GT has not been correlated to alcohol consumption.
In the introduction almost a whole page is devoted to Echinococcus which is not related to the targets of this paper. (It is understandable however that it was the original aim of the study). The discussion in general tends to repeat results and there is limited literature comparisons from the country itself and abroad.
The article needs more sophisticated statistical correlations.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests