Reviewer's report

Title: Anthropometric measures and nutritional state in a healthy elderly population

Version: 2 Date: 14 October 2005

Reviewer: Mauro Eduarado Valencia

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper presents interesting and important information in well selected elderly subjects from a development region. It is a cross sectional study form a national health system in Mexico. The data seem sound and collected with care. The method section for the anthropometric measurements is well defined. The manuscript adheres to the relevant standards of reporting and data deposition and the conclusions are adequate and supported by the data.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic information, but it is not mentioned in the methods section.

It is stated that this study is derived from a national study as a subsample of healthy elderly subjects, however the reader does not have this information. Does it include rural or only urban areas; does it include indian groups and mestizos from all the regions and in what proportions? With regards to the national representativity. This is very important since the conclusions suggest that the data could be used as "reference anthropometric values" for healthy individuals in Mexico. The necessary information should be provided in the method section and the authors should acknowledge the limitations of the study accordingly.

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

The term “IMSS beneficiaries” should not be in tables, just in the text and probably substituted by “participating subjects” or similar.

Throughout the text and title, “nutritional state” should be changes to “nutritional status”

In the Background section, when mentioning the body composition methods, “labeled potassium” should be substituted by “measuring K-40 by whole body counting” In the methods section in the first line "used" instead of "use".

There are other editorial changes needed

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
The authors should consider if repeating percentages in the results is all that necessary, since they are already in the Tables. It is best to focus on the main data with statistical components and just refer the reader to the tables. This will make the article shorter and easier to read.

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

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests

Mauro E Valencia, PhD