Author’s response to reviews

Title: Metabolic and Endocrinologic complications in Beta-thalassemia major: A Multicenter Study in Tehran

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Emma Veitch,
Assistant Editor,
BMC Journals

Dear Emma Veitch

Greetings,
I would like to thank you on accepting our article titled "Metabolic and Endocrinologic complications in Beta-thalassemia major: A Multicenter Study in Tehran" for publication in "BMC Endocrine Disorders". We are also grateful to the invaluable comments of the reviewers. It is to say that we made the suggested changes as is mentioned point by point in the following paragraphs in the same order of the second reviewer comments. It may be of note to know that in the reviewer version of the article, there are some mistakes regarding the name and title of the authors:

1- Alireza Abdollah Shamshirsaz, MD ("Abdollah Shamshirsaz" is the last name There is no middle name)
2- Mir Reza Bekheirnia, MD ("Mir Reza" is the first name. There is no middle name)
3- Mohammad Kamgar, MD
4- Nima Pourzahedgilani, MD
5- Navid Bouzari, MD
6- Mohammad Reza Habibzadeh, MD ("Mohammad Reza" is first name)
7- Reza Hashemi, MD
8- Amir Hooshang Abdollah Shamshirsaz, MD ("Amir Hooshang" is the first name, "Abdollah Shamshirsaz" is the last name with no middle name)
9- Hooman Homayoun, MD ("H" as the middle name should be omitted)
10- Bagher Larijani, MD ("B" as the middle name should be omitted)
a- Abstract: In the last sentence of the background "...their relationship" has been omitted.

b- Abstract: In the method section we added "...anthropometric data...", "...menstrual histories..." and "...patients have been examined to determine their pubertal status"

c- Main paper, Background, line 3: "globulin" is changed to "globin".

d- Background: paragraph 2, after ref [5]: "...a disease characterized by loss of bone mass and micro architectural deterioration resulting in reduced mechanical competence and consequent increased risk of fracture which..." is omitted.

After ref [6]:" ...Although some studies have reported low serum zinc in thalassemic patients, another has reported serum zinc level to be higher" is omitted.

Immediately after ref [6]: "There are no data reflecting the bone mineral density status of Iranian thalassemic patients." is added.

Immediately after ref [9]: "...have not been fully studied in our patients yet." is added.

e- End of that section: "...in a period of life, when disturbance in any of these parameters may have considerable effects on patients, later in life." is omitted.

f- Start of method section: The method of random selection is completely explained as follows:

"Among 12 thalassemia clinics in Tehran, six were randomly selected. Between November 2000 and February 2001, 258 adolescent homozygous beta- thalassemia patients were recruited with proportional to size randomselection method based on registered cases in each of these clinics."

6th line same section: "...from early years of life." is added.

h- In the method section: We have reordered what we had done as: "history, clinical examination, lab tests...".

i- We have transferred "reference ranges" from method to result section. Definition of bone mineral density disturbances has been explained in the methods.

j- Paragraph 4, 3rd line of methods: "Impaired puberty was defined as more than 2 SD delay in pubertal development beyond the mean for their sex." is added.

In the same section: Pubertal disorders definitions and prevalence refer to the relevant subgroups.

k- Results, page 9, 2nd line: "...Sixteen percent of patients..." is changed to "...Sixteen percent of diabetic patients...".

l- Method section, Page 7, 3rd line: "Patients' evaluation for endocrine complications was performed annually. Bone mineral density measurement and determination of serum zinc and copper are not components of routine patients' workup." is added.

m- Results: The thyroid function test results have been omitted.

n- Discussion, line 4: Three out of "39" postmenarchal patients... 39 is added.

o- Discussion: Many of our study group had not yet reached the age for formal diagnosis of hypogonadism.

p- Discussion, before ref [16]: The sentence is changed to: "In a longitudinal study, prevalence of hypogonadism has been reported to be as much as 75% in girls and 62% in boys."

q- Discussion: "Short stature which may be a remarkable..." is changed to "Short stature seemed to
be more prevalent among our patients compared to other studies" and "High endocrine abnormalities were..." is changed to "High prevalence of endocrine...".

r- Discussion, last paragraph: High prevalence of zinc deficiency in Iranian population is referred to ref [40]. It goes without saying that ref [40, 41] are changed to [41, 42].

I am looking forward to hearing from you.
Sincerely yours,
Alireza

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