Reviewer’s report

Title: Gastrointestinal symptoms before and during menses in healthy women.

Version: 1 Date: 12 July 2013

Reviewer: Ma.Luisa Marvan

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

Introduction:
- The last paragraph of the Introduction section (page 4) is too confusing. For example, the sentence of the second line says: “this healthy sample of women served as a control group in that study”. It would be helpful if authors rewrite this paragraph.

Material and Methods:
- Please explain about the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample.
- Those women with any GI diagnoses were excluded, but what about women with PMS or psychiatric disorders? My concern is that the objective of the research was to study healthy women. If authors did not control this variable, they should comment about it in the limitations of the study.
- I understand that there are no questionnaires to measure GI symptoms in the premenstrual or menstrual phases, but there are questionnaires that measure emotional symptoms such as depression, anxiety and others. Therefore, it should be clarified why the authors did not use one of these questionnaires.
- Please add the reliability of the questionnaire that was developed, as well as the details about how it was designed. Was it tested before the current study?
- The statistical analyses section is too confusing. Please clarify it.

Results:
- It is not clear which were the statistical tests used to compare the data described on page 7 (first, the authors compared premenstrual vs. menstrual phases. Then, they compared women with vs. without emotional symptoms. So, two different statistical tests should be used).

Minor Essential Revisions:

Results:
- The titles of both Tables are wrong.

The title of the Table 1 says “Characteristics Related to Menstrual History”, and
the table contains the current age of participants.

The title of the Table 2 says “Proportion experiencing GI and mood symptoms”; it should say “Proportion of PARTICIPANTS who...” or “Proportion of WOMEN who…”

- There are some repeated results in the text and in the Table 2 (for example, the proportion of women who reported depressive symptoms).

- The p value is not enough; please add the values of the tests and the degree of freedom.

**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.