Author's response to reviews

Title: The effect of physical activity and body mass index on menopausal symptoms in Turkish women: a cross-sectional study in primary care

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We are so thankful for the fruitful comments of the reviewers. We believe that they were so helpful for the improvement of our manuscript.

Below you will find our replies for their recommendations. We tried our best. If offered any, we would appreciate for further recommendations.

Sincerely,

Neslisah TAN, MD

Reviewer 1.

PLEASE, REMOVE "The BMI was calculated by measuring weight and height" FROM INSTRUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION

The sentence is removed as recommended.

Reviewer 2.

1. Title:
a. With the strong focus on Turkish women it is suggested that the population studied be added to the title.

As recommended the study population is added to the title.

2. Abstract:
a. Change “information questionnaire” to be more descriptive and if generic medical and demographic I would leave it off.

To be more descriptive it is changed to “a generic medical and socio-demographic information questionnaire”.

b. Inconsistent use of p denotation. p=0.004 vs. p<0.001. Correct throughout manuscript for consistency.

For absolute p values we used p=0.004. For to show p=0.000 values we used p<0.001.

c. spacing issue [for most menopausal symptoms, including sleep]

The space is corrected.

d. Add direction of BMI and depressive mood association (assumed to be negative).

The direction of BMI and depressive mood association is added.

e. Perhaps reframe conclusion to say “As part of preventive medicine, primary care physicians should also stress lifestyle changes, including physical activity, to
manage menopausal symptoms.

*The sentence is reframed as recommended.*

3. Introduction:

a. P2L2; [anxiety, vaginal itching and dryness, and urinary symptoms]

*The sentence is corrected.*

b. P2L4; Sentence is comma spliced with hot flush rates not being related to vaginal atrophy. Suggest making 2 different sentences.

*The sentence is divided into 2 different sentences.*

c. Reference to osteoporosis and atherosclerotic CVD is not necessary in this introduction as the study did not address these outcomes. Suggest deletion

*The sentence is deleted.*

d. Begin new paragraph with “Although the nature and prevalence of menopausal symptoms….”

New paragraph begins with “Although the nature and prevalence of menopausal symptoms….”

e. While many women are now seeking alternatives, …. [lifestyle changes to manage symptoms].

*The sentence is corrected.*

f. Next sentence should not be a new paragraph. [There are promising results in this aspect………]. AND it is not appropriate as your study did not address mechanisms of how PA/BMI influences menopausal symptoms.

*The paragraph has been edited as recommended.*

g. Statement on Klinga et al is incongruent with the set-up of the content in the previous paragraph. If E1 and E2 decrease earlier in obese women they would logically have greater vasomotor symptoms. Address.

*The paragraph has been edited as recommended.*

h. Introduction could still benefit from a hypothesis statement.

*We tried to give the hypothesis in the objective of the study in introduction.*

4. Methods:

a. Rephrase last sentence of the MRS to suggest that increasing severity as reported using MRS is linked with quality of life.
The sentence is rephrased.

b. IPAQ paragraph should be the same paragraph.

IPAQ is written in the same paragraph.

c. Noted that no power calculations are offered.

The power of the study to show the association between PA and total MRS scores is calculated as 100% and the association between BMI and total MRS scores is calculated as 96%.

5. Results:
   a. Check significant figures of all data in text and tables. For example, age and BMI should only be carried to 1 decimal place.

   Age, BMI and significant figures in text and tables are carried to 1 decimal place.

   b. Rephrase statement for BMI as the use of the term “while” is not logical.

   The sentence is rephrased.

6. Discussion:
   a. In addition to the culture statement in the first paragraph, this discussion could benefit from the addition of information related to the links between PA and symptoms.

   The relationships between PA, BMI and menopausal symptoms are highlighted in the subsequent paragraphs.

   b. An important part of the cultural aspects of menopausal symptoms (east vs. west), is that your sample was collected in primary care which could be related to the fact that these women were seeking for treatment and thus biased the levels of reported symptoms. This should be added to the limitations of this study.

   Women who consulted the health center for any reason were recruited into this cross-sectional study.

   c. Somato-vegetative symptoms in working or retired women being lower than no working women may have nothing to do with PA levels (implied by the use of the term sedentary) but may be due to the fact that working women have higher levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy as you indicated in the last sentence.

   The sentence is changed.

   d. PA and vasomotor symptoms paragraph: typo [effect of physical activity and asses[s] the effect of ……

   The word is corrected.
e. Grammer structure…..[sexual problems and vaginal dryness was higher in women with reported lower levels of physical activity]

*The sentence is corrected.*

7. Conclusion:
   a. The strong statement regarding weight control and regular PA being recommended are beyond the data reported in this manuscript (especially weight control as no relation was determined between BMI and symptoms).

*The sentence is changed.*

8. Tables:
   a. Table 2 – spelling of title “Somatovegatatief”

*The word is corrected.*

   b. Table 2 and 3 and 4 - Inconsistent use of period versus comma for all numberings

*The commas are corrected throughout manuscript.*

   c. Table 2 – when expressing p value of significant for categories with more than 2 there should be post-hoc. For example educational level has 3 categories – which one is significantly different?

*The significant categories according to post-hoc are pointed out. Tukey was applied for multiple comparisons in post-hoc-tests.*