Author's response to reviews

Title: Complementary and alternative medicine use in adolescents with inflammatory bowel disease and juvenile idiopathic arthritis

Authors:

Pauliina Nousiainen (pauliina.nousiainen@fiment.fi)
Laura Merras-Salmio (laura.merras-salmio@helsinki.fi)
Kristiina Aalto (kristiina.alto@hus.fi)
Kaija-Leena Kolho (kaija-leena.kolho@helsinki.fi)

Version: 3
Date: 18 March 2014

Author's response to reviews:

The Editor
BMC Complementary & Alternative Medicine
Helsinki, 18th March, 2014

Dear Sir,

Attached, please, find the revised version of our manuscript MS:187886341120421 entitled “Complementary and alternative medicine use in adolescents with inflammatory bowel disease and juvenile idiopathic arthritis” by Nousiainen P, Merras-Salmio L, Aalto K and Kolho K-L. We have now improved the manuscript according to the suggestions made by the reviewers. All changes made are shown in track changes –mode. Specific point-to-point responses to the reviewers are given below.

We hope our manuscript now fulfils the criteria for publication in the BMC Complementary & Alternative Medicine.

Yours sincerely,
Kaija-Leena Kolho, MD, PhD
Children’s Hospital
University of Helsinki
P.O. Box 281
FI-00029 HYKS, Finland
fax:+358-9-471 74709
tel:+358-50-427 1392
email: kaija-leena.kolho@helsinki.fi
Editorial comments

1. We have now uploaded the questionnaire used in our study (version used in mailing in 2012; Additional file 1). However, it is in Finnish and the commercial names of the products may be different in other countries.

2. We have revised the Author’s Contribution section and the manuscript to conform to the journal style.

Reviewer 1

1. According to the ethics, patients may decline participation without telling their reasons and therefore, such data are not available.

2. We did not survey the visits to CAM practitioners.

3. The types of mind-body medicine therapies and body-based therapies practiced are now given in the results section (page 8).

4. The topic why traditional forms of CAM are not so much used in Finland among this patient group and other patient groups is beyond the scope of this study and therefore we did not extend the discussion.

5. We did not ask the patients whether they had discussed CAM use with the physician or other healthcare provider (added in discussion) and this aspect warrants further studies.

Reviewer 2

1. We agree that the term “peers” was a mistake and have revised the sentence to match the results.

Reviewer 3

1. We agree that the word “population” was inappropriate. We have modified the abstract and have now included that the study was conducted at Children’s Hospital, University of Helsinki, Finland.

2. We omitted the p-values in the abstract.

3. There is a more recent publication by Jussila A et al Inflamm Bowel Dis 2012;18:555-561 covering the nationwide incidence of IBD in Finland between 2000 and 2007. However, as the increase in the incidence of pediatric IBD is not specifically addressed in this paper, we did not include this article as a reference.

4. Unfortunately the referee does not give any specific suggestions which papers he would prefer to be cited. We chose a recent review on hepatotoxicity in a high-quality journal as we find this aspect of special importance. Also, the adverse events of CAM are not the focus of this study. Thus, we did not add any
references.

5. The questionnaires were coded and analyzed anonymously as stated in the methods section. However, mailing cannot occur anonymously. Hence, the researches could trace the names of the recipients of the questionnaires that were not returned (i.e. the names of the non-responders). Thus, we could perform a drop-out analysis to improve the quality of the study.

6. The given sentence “Indicators identified…” is based on the references given at the end of the sentence, as this is not a result of our study. We state in the same paragraph that we did not question the reasons for the use of CAM in our study and consider this essential for the discussion. The adherence to conventional medication is presented in the results section (page 9, paragraph starting with “The type of medication used…” and the given section in discussion summarizes the results.

7. We clarified the second last paragraph dealing with response-rate.