Reviewer’s report

Title: Intakes of culinary herbs and spices from a food frequency questionnaire evaluated against 28-days estimated records

Version: 2 Date: 3 April 2011

Reviewer: Janice Stuff

Reviewer’s report:

Review

The authors have improved the manuscript, and made an effort to address the problems suggested by the reviewers. However, some important issues need further clarification for the methods and interpretation of results.

1. Table 2 presents data on g/eating occasion for 146 subjects. Has the data been corrected for autocorrelation of subjects? In other words, were there multiple meals or eating occasions for each subject? If so, data need to state there is repeated measures on each subject and need adjustment.

2. Authors need to address the confusion between response in #5 vs. lines 126-127 regarding units expressed as total g/day?

Statement In Authors Responses item #5:

sizes estimated from the FFQ and the HSR, per eating occasion instead of per day.

Ideally we would have estimated the intake as g/person/day as we usually do with other food items and beverages, but in this case the amounts used were so small and the frequencies in many cases very low, so the g/person/day unit was not an adequate unit to use.

Statement in Manuscript:

126 Total intake of herbs and spices is given in g/person/day. The intakes of individual herbs and spices
127 are presented as frequency of intake in times per month and portion size in g per eating occasion.

3. Authors have added the kappa statistic. It needs to be mentioned in the methods section, and a brief phrase on its interpretation of good agreement. Were results of the wilcoxon test retained, in which table?

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: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.