Reviewer's report

Title: Chocolate intake and arterial stiffness in subjects with cardiovascular risk factors

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Reviewer: Kiran Ahuja

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Major issues
- Introduction does not provide a good enough rational for conducting this trial.
- Rationale not provided for categorising the chocolate intake into <4.29g/day or >4.29g/d consumption. Most other studies discuss the health benefits of chocolate/cocoa at 6g or higher consumption per day.
- Median chocolate intake has been shown to be 2g/day. This means most of the people in the study have low chocolate intake making the data skewed to no/ low chocolate intake. This may possibly impact on the statistics used. I am not an expert in statistics but I wonder if it would have been better to analyse the data ( chocolate intake) as a continuous variable in the linear regression model than as a categorical variable.
- In the results the authors suggest a higher PWV in non-chocolate consumers but in discussion they say that chocolate intake is not associated with vascular stiffness. I would like to see reasoning for coming to this conclusion.
- The authors do not report if they separated the data into normal and dark chocolate or cocoa content. Most literature discusses the data in terms of cocoa content.
- Discussion is minimal. What is provided is the repetition of results and results of other studies. There is no discussion as why the authors think the results of this study are different from other studies.

Minor issues
- No references are given for the technique use.
- No information on the equipment (company etc)
- Need improvement in English.
- I wonder what do the authors mean by ‘black’ chocolate in Discussion

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests