Reviewer's report

Title: Hypocaloric diet supplemented with probiotic cheese improves body mass index and blood pressure indices of obese hypertensive patients - a randomized double-blind placebocontrolled pilot study

Version: 1 Date: 13 June 2013

Reviewer: Philippe Marteau

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

The composition of the product and the placebo concerning the probiotic strain but also the other strains (i.e. “cheese” or “starter” strains) should be provided (to properly interpret results and ascribe them to the probiotic itself, the reader should know that the composition of the probiotic and control products differed only for the probiotic strains. One may imagine that adding a strain may interfere with the others).

What was the statistical hypothesis of this trial? how was the number of subjects calculated when designing the trial? what was the primary end point for this calculation?

What were the questions and hypothesis behind studying body water content and markers of protein catabolism?

Excluded subjects should be presented in the result section and not in the statistical method.

What is the relevance for obese subjects to lose water at three weeks of consumption? The authors interpret this as “quite promising” and this should be discussed more critically (for example, can one predict if the effect might persist on a longer term basis than 3 weeks)

Water loss explains the difference between the probiotic and control. What was the % of subjects receiving diuretics in both groups? does the strain has diuretic effect? or what could be the mechanism for losing water content, and what could be done to progress in this knowledge (main result of the present trial) in future studies?

The health consequences of the excess of markers for protein catabolism with this food product should be discussed (potentially deleterious?).

- Minor Essential Revisions

What was the mode of randomization? Was the disequilibrium in number of probiotic and control subjects planed?

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests