Author’s response to reviews

Title: Effect of yogurt containing polydextrose, Lactobacillus acidophilus NCFM and Bifidobacterium lactis HN019: a randomized, double-blind, controlled study in chronic constipation

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Author’s response to reviews:

Reviewer: Umberto Morelli

1- Lactobacillus acidophilus NCFM and Bifidobacterium lactis HN019 are referred in literature as probiotics with good effect on constipation1 as shown in a recent meta-analysis2. The authors intended to verify if this association could have a synergic effect and therefore it was shown in the present paper.

2- Agachan score is an useful way to verify constipation severity and associated symptoms. The Bristol scale used to access stool's quality was applied to the questionnaire and distributed to the patients, but these data were not used since we observed a great variability and no correlation with Agachan score.

3- Comparing present results were difficult. In spite of the fact that probiotics have shown good effects on gastrointestinal functional disorders, the presentations are quite different from many strains and diverse concentrations. For that reason, the authors limited the discussion to the more relevant and similar papers.

Reviewer: Retnagowri Rajandram

The authors used a randomised table and this will be included in the text. Dietary diaries were taken, and it was possible to identify in a large number of participants low fibre intake. Since dietary counseling could reduce or impede the analysis of the association of prebiotics and probiotics of the present stud and so
this was not done.

It was not our goal to analyse long-term results, but it seems reasonable to assume that the re-introduction of treatment can be done once the participants showed no side effects. Although, these data do not allow us to assess whether patients with recurrent constipation will have similar initial response.

Paragraph starting with "Analysis of Agachan score" was changed to "Favourable clinical response was assessed since Agachan score had a significant reduction at the end of the study in both groups" and in the conclusion it will be included" and showed that can be an option for constipation treatment."

Sentence starting with "However this reached only..." changed to There was a decrease in the CTT when comparing initial and final transit time in both groups, however, this reached only statistical significance for the treatment group (t-test, p=0.001).

In the Result Section, Figure 1 and the last paragraph starting with "As can be seen from Figure 1..." were removed from the text.

Mr Rajandram’s minor essential revisions were all accepted and text corrections have been done and are highlighted in yellow.