Reviewer's report

Title: Reported food intake and distribution of body fat: A repeated cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 30 October 2006

Reviewer: Helle Hare-Bruun

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a very interesting study, which presents a new angle on the question of the associations between food intake and waist and hip circumferences. The topic is relevant as the prevalence of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease is increasing in most of the world.
The study is based on four independent cross-sectional surveys conducted in the Northern Sweden. The main findings are that the more favorable gynoid fat distribution is associated with increased use of vegetable oil, pasta, and 1.5% fat milk. Abdominal obesity is associated with increased consumption of beer in men, and increased consumption of hamburgers and french fries in women.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
There is a general use of the word "change/changes" in food intake, waist circumference, and hip circumference throughout the manuscript. I find this wording problematic as this, to me, implies individual differences between two time points. Instead phrases like "time trends" and "mean differences" would be preferable. This would avoid potential misunderstandings for the readers.
This comment also applies to tables and figures.

I recommend that the last paragraph on page 13 and the first paragraph on page 14 are included in the conclusion in order to emphasize the very interesting main findings of the study instead of hiding them in the general discussion.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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