Reviewer's report

Title: Dietary and other lifestyle correlates of serum folate concentrations in a healthy adult population in Crete, Greece: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 3 November 2005

Reviewer: Antonia Trichopoulou

Reviewer's report:

An interesting study that could throw light on which lifestyle factors (tobacco, coffee, alcohol) and which foods are important determinants of serum folate levels and what amount of variation of serum folate individually and collectively explain.

Discretionary revisions (but potentially important)

- The data in tables 4 and 5 as well as 4 and 6 require mutual adjustment among tobacco, coffee, alcohol, the indicated nutrients (table 5) or food groups (table 6) (as well as demographic variables and energy intake-attention to colinearity). It is indicated in the text that after adjustment for folate intake the tobacco/coffee associations with folate in the serum, disappear, which means that table 4 and the abstract do not present the unconfounded and more valid results.

- In table 1, footnote 3, applies only to energy intake or to other entries? Please clarify.

Could you consider expanding on the interesting finding that although most subjects do not take adequate folate with their diet only a tiny minority have unacceptably low serum values?

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'