Author's response to reviews

Title: Nutrient adequacy during weight loss interventions: a randomized study in women comparing the dietary intake in a meal replacement group with a traditional food group

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Version: 2 Date: 15 May 2007

Author's response to reviews: see over
May 15, 2007

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the two peer-reviewer’s comments on our submitted article, “Nutrient Adequacy during weight loss interventions: a randomized study comparing the dietary intake in a meal replacement group with a traditional group” (MS6970436612680073) We appreciate that the reviewer’s comments and use of their expertise will help to improve the content and clarity of the manuscript.

We feel that we have adequately addressed all of the comments and made the major revisions needed. A point-by-point response specific to each of the comments and concerns follows.

We look forward to your response to this revised manuscript.

Sincerely,

Judith Ashley, PhD, RD
Associate Professor and Director, Didactic Program in Dietetics
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Major Compulsory Revisions.

Using a BMI of 25-35 for subjects (especially why the upper cutoff was set at 35).
The methods section now contains, “Women were eligible if they were overweight to mildly obese as defined by a BMI (kg/m2) between 25 and 35. This is referenced as the range defined by NIH (reference 6).

Vitamin A and E comments.
The reporting of serum vitamin A and vitamin E concentrations has been omitted from this revised manuscript and tables. Therefore several comments from the reviewer about the reporting and measurement vitamin A and E are not specifically addressed in the revised manuscript. The revised manuscript now concentrates on the food record results and analysis.

Food Guide Pyramid comments.
The dates during which the study was conducted is now included in the Methods section, showing why the Food Guide Pyramid guideline rather than the MyPyramid guideline (which was released after the study was conducted) was used.

Meal replacement drinks or meal replacement bars used.
The manuscript now mentions why the choice of either meal replacement drinks or meal replacement bars was used, primarily to provide variety of comparable products for compliance during this year-long study. The manuscript also more clearly states that only the study brand (Unilever) was used, since the reviewer’s comments indicated that she understood from the commentary that different meal replacement bars and drinks were used.

Incorporation of fruits and vegetables.
The information that fruits and vegetables were incorporated into the intervention for Group 1 has been added as suggested.

Minnesota NDS Research program release date.
The release date of version 3.2 has now been added as suggested.

Statistical design and attrition rate.
The attrition rate greater than 20% (27%) over the one year conduct of the study has now been addressed as suggested.

Last sentence of Methods (See discussion…)
This sentence has been omitted as suggested.

DRI term Acceptable Macronutrient Distribution Range.
This term is now used as suggested. It is also defined in Box 1.

Comparison of <2/3 RDA.
The section using <2/3 RDA as a comparison has been omitted as suggested.

Lipid panels and homocysteine concentrations.
The reporting of lipid panels and homocysteine concentrations has been omitted from this revised manuscript and tables. Therefore comments from the reviewer about the reporting of these measurements are not specifically addressed in this revised manuscript. As mentioned above, the revised manuscript now concentrates on the food record results and analysis.

Conclusion sentence about calcium.
This sentence has been moved to the Discussion section as suggested.
Minor Essential Revisions.

DRI Definitions
A new Box 1 containing several DRI definitions (EAR, RDA, AI, UL, AMDR, REE) is included and referenced as suggested.

Conclusions sentence.
The words overweight/obese are added after healthy as suggested.

Tables 1 and 2.
Weight values only in kg are now included as suggested. Because BMI values use a formula based on height and weight, specific height values were not added as suggested.

Tables 3 and 4.
Based on the second reviewer’s suggestion, these tables have been changed to include side-by-side comparisons of the two groups. In doing this, as suggested by the second reviewer, the column of DRI values was omitted.

Discretionary Revisions.
Both of these suggestions were included.

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Version 1: Date 29 January 2007
Reviewer Jamy D Ard, MD

Major Compulsory Revisions.

Abstract.

Content:
The abstract background has been shortened and more detail about the methods has been added as suggested.

Macronutrient ratios:
There has been a clarification added that the ratios pertain to Carbohydrate: Protein: Fat. The percent change has been removed as suggested.

Methods.

EAR discussion.
The discussion of the EAR was moved to the statistical analysis section as suggested.

Vitamin and homocysteine measurements.
The measurement of serum levels (concentrations) of vitamins and homocysteine is no longer included in the manuscript or tables. Therefore, the limitation of not including the use of dietary supplements prior to or during the intervention as it pertains to these measurements is not addressed. However, it is emphasized more in the manuscript that this study addressed the intake and adequacy of nutrients from foods, and did not look at the use of dietary supplements.

Results.

Adding 100 kcal/week.
The section on the goal of increasing the subject’s intake by 100 kcal/week has been omitted from the manuscript, since this component of the study was not implemented for any subjects. The women who completed the 1 year assessment were still reporting calorie restricting, but not at the intake goal of 5400 kJ/day.

**Tables.**
The Tables have been modified to more easily compare the TFG and MRG groups, as suggested. The suggestion to remove the DRI enabled the tables to be condensed in this way.

**Minor Essential Revisions.**
The spelling of “counseling” was corrected.

The calories of the MR bars has been included as suggested.

**Discretionary Revisions.**
EAR Table. Potassium in now included in the table, with the N/A designation.