Reviewer's report

Title: An increase of cereal intake as an approach to weight reduction in children is effective only when accompanied by nutrition education: a randomized controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 4 July 2008

Reviewer: Louise Aston

Reviewer's report:

The question posed is novel and the design appropriate to test the hypothesis. The data seem to be well-controlled and sound but interpretation requires some revision. The title is appropriate and descriptive and the conclusions appropriate to the findings. The paper is generally well-written but language needs checking in places.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. P.8, line 7: 'resultant loss' is a rather misleading term as it takes into account a gain in the control group. 'Difference in weight change between groups' would be more appropriate.

2. P.8, line 7: I am unclear from table 3 as to where the figure 1.48 comes from, as it does not equate to either the adjusted or the unadjusted difference in weight change between groups 3 & 4.

3. P.8, line 5: make it clear that this is unadjusted result only and gains are no longer significant after adjustments.

4. Also make clearer in description of other results which are adjusted/unadjusted.

5. Abstract - make it clearer in results that there was no effect of cereal alone on weight.

Minor essential revisions

1. P.3, line 15: 'cursing'???

2. P.4, line 11: express as kg/m2

3. P.4, line 14: mis-spelling of overweight.

4. P.7, line 18: change confirm to compare?

5. P.8, line 1: change 'chart flow' to 'flow chart'

Discretionary Revisions
1. Suggest shortening background section by shortening description of the well-known link between obesity and chronic diseases, but include reference to reciprocal relationship between carbohydrate and fat in the diet as a rationale for using the cereal. This is mentioned briefly in the discussion but would be useful in the background section.

2. Consider some re-wording and ordering of the 'subjects and place of study' section of the methods, which is rather difficult to read - perhaps consider using a flow chart of the screening and recruitment process to illustrate numbers at each stage.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.