Reviewer's report

Title: Lifestyle risk factors and residual life expectancy at age 40: a German cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 3 February 2014

Reviewer: Michael Leitzmann

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Previous research has shown that the relation of body mass to mortality varies markedly according to smoking status. Thus, it would be desirable to examine potential effect modification of the association between adiposity and RLE by smoking status and present results stratified by smoking status.

Also, the observation of a strong association between underweight and RLE suggests the possibility of reverse causation due to pre-existing but undiagnosed chronic disease (i.e. wasting). Please consider presenting results of a sensitivity analysis that excludes the initial years of follow-up.

The quality of the manuscript would be enhanced if the Methods section included data on the validity and reproducibility of the main exposures.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.