Reviewer's report

Title: Early Life Environment and Natural History of Inflammatory Bowel Diseases

Version: 3

Date: 23 October 2014

Reviewer: Whitney Tang

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Minor Essential Revisions

1. Method: There is no sample size justification. Will the non-significant association between exposures and surgery in UC due to under power of small sample size?

2. Results: There is a category of “unsure” in the questionnaire. Are they excluded from the analysis? What is the sample size included in the multivariate regression models and mutually adjusted model?

3. Results: Although studies showed conflicting result, exposure to antibiotics is also a factor of interest as an important environmental factors associated with IBD pathogenesis. There is question about antibiotics included in the questionnaire. Was the association between exposure to antibiotics and disease outcome analyzed?

4. Table 1: Characteristics of study population can be separated into UC and CD since they were analyzed separately, and only factors associated with CD showed significant result.

5. Typo in line 166: 95% CI

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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