Author's response to reviews

Title: The effect of individualized NUTritional counseling on muscle mass and treatment outcome in patients with metastatic COLOrectal cancer undergoing chemotherapy: a randomized controlled trial protocol

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Author's covering letter for initial submission

**Title:** The effect of individualized NUTritional counseling on muscle mass and treatment outcome in patients with metastatic COLOrectal cancer undergoing chemotherapy: a randomized controlled trial protocol

**Authors:**

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To: the editor
BMC Cancer

Amsterdam, October 9th 2014

Dear editor,

Please find enclosed the study protocol article ‘The effect of individualized NUTritional counseling on muscle mass and treatment outcome in patients with metastatic COLOrectal cancer undergoing chemotherapy: a randomized controlled trial protocol’.

A low muscle mass is prevalent in patients with metastatic colorectal cancer (mCRC) and these patients are at risk for further loss of muscle mass during chemotherapy. Observational studies have shown that a low muscle mass is associated with poor outcome. However, to our knowledge no randomized controlled trials have been performed to evaluate the effect of nutritional intervention on muscle mass and on treatment outcome in patients with mCRC. We designed a RCT to test our hypothesis that individual nutritional counseling by a trained dietitian during first-line chemotherapy is effective in preserving muscle mass and thereby may improve clinical outcome in patients with mCRC.

With this article, we aim to provide complete and transparent information on the background and methodology of our randomized controlled trial. We have not submitted this article to other journals.

We have enclosed the original ethics committee approval and grant approval letter from Alpe d’Huzes in Dutch and an English translation of these documents.

Sincerely,

Anne van der Werf