Reviewer’s report

Title: Occurrence of colorectal aberrant crypt foci depending on age and dietary patterns of patients

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Reviewer: Luca Roncucci

Reviewer's report:

The work of Kowalczyk and coauthors is a report on colorectal aberrant crypt foci observed during endoscopic examination.

Overall the paper has merit, and it includes interesting observations on epidemiology of ACF according to age, dietary habits, and BMI in a supposed normal population. However it needs to be largely improved both on the content and on the form. Also the English language should be extensively edited.

The main drawbacks are in the methods section, that is rather poor, it should be changed adding more information on patients (the endoscopic procedure used in order to identify ACF (instrument, magnification, observed area of the rectum, methods of recording, etc...). How many patients had a normal colonoscopy? (Some of them have diverticula, how many?). Why men were younger than women?

The surface pattern of ACF was described in Roncucci L et al. Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers and Prevention 1: 57-60, 1991, and it was not an endoscopic work.

What kind of questionnaire was administered to subjects? Was it a food frequency questionnaire?

In the Result section of the paper figures are briefly described, but they are difficult to interpret. They should be considerably improved both in the legend and in graphics. Many errors are present (i.e., in fig 4 the third column lacks label, dysplastic??). Often labels in figures are overlapped and not located in the right place. I also suggest to reports numbers of subjects in the various groups in the text, because it is often hard to understand from the figures. It could be nice to have one or two figures of ACF observed at endoscopy. In Fig 3 the number of ACF increases until the age of 130 (?), is it only a projection? Fig 6 has bar labels in Polish. Fig 8. BMI is usually measured in Kg/m2. Here I can not understand the numbers in the x axis. Statistical
comparisons between groups should be reported, i.e., among the age groups, according to dietary habits, and BMI.

Discussion. Pg 7, line 18. In Roncucci L, et al Cancer Res 53: 3726-9, 1993 is reported that only overall proliferation is increased in ACF, not an upward shift of the proliferative zone.


Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?  
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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