Reviewer's report

Title: Characteristics of keratoconic patients at two main eye centres in Palestine: a cross-sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 12 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Ebru Toker

Reviewer's report:

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This retrospective cross-sectional study reports the characteristics of patients diagnosed as keratoconus at two eye centers in Palestine.

In general:

Editing help from a proficient English proofreader would certainly improve the quality of the manuscript.

Some of the language mistakes at first glance;

Abstract line 37: "that KC is a much higher in middle-eastern countries in comparison to other regions of the world-----"KC has a much higher prevalence ......."
Line 45: "A retrospective was conducted in two ophthalmology center.."----" A retrospective study was"
Line 16:"Most of the patients in their twenties with...."----"Most of the patients in their twenties presented with..

Introduction
Line 38: "...from blurred vision till blindness..."—"...to blindness"
Line 57 "Another factor associated with increase the risk of KC is."--" Another factor associated with an increase in the risk…."

Materials:
Line 20 "depending into..." ----"depending on."

Results-Line 42-43, distribution of age group, lines 1-12 ; sex predilection lines 30-37; demographic characteristics lines 49-59; overall discussion

Specific comments:

Introduction:
Nicotine is presented as a risk factor with an irrelevant reference (no 5). If smoking is meant by nicotine, it actually is a protective factor against KC.

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this study is to describe the epidemiological and demographic characteristics of the disease, genetic and environmental risk factors. However only a few epidemiological and demographic data -sex, bilaterality and residency are presented and evaluated in the study. Including other epidemiological factors- as clearly stated by the authors in the first and second paragraphs of the introduction section like family history, consanguinity, associated systemic diseases, history of atopic disease and eye rubbing would have provided more valuable information.

Results:
The authors state that patients from the rural area have higher mean K readings, but the data is not provided in the text.
I would suggest showing age distribution with a histogram instead in table2, would be more demonstrative.

What is meant by "a significant association between sex and severity of KC"?

Discussion:
In general, due to language mistakes, discussion was difficult to read and understand.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
No

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Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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