Reviewer's report

Title: Awareness of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity: Can information on guidelines prevent overestimation?

Version: 2 Date: 4 March 2015

Reviewer: Sveinung Berntsen

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The cross-sectional study where an online survey included items on minutes spent in MVPA, awareness of MVPA using constructs highlighted by the precaution adoption process model, subjective norms, knowledge of guidelines, health status and demographics was completed by 1724 UK adults. The aim of the present study was to determine whether knowledge of MVPA guidelines, subjective norms, health status and normal walking intensity had on adults’ awareness of their MVPA level. The authors reported from logistic regression analyses that high subjective norms, average or below, average health status and a self-reported regular walking pace of moderate-to-vigorous intensity were associated with accurate MVPA awareness. Knowledge of MVPA guidelines was not associated with MVPA awareness.

The authors concluded that mass media campaigns, informing the general public of MVPA guidelines may be more powerful targeting subjective norms instead of knowledge of guidelines, thereby raising awareness of personal MVPA behaviour among inactive adults and increasing motivation to engage in more MVPA.

The manuscript is well written and the topic of the present study is relevant given the last decades focus on how to increase physical activity level and also campaigns for the population with the intention to increase knowledge of the amount of MVPA required for good health. Use of objective measures of physical activity and measures of preferred walking speed would have strengthened the study. I have some comments presented below:

ABSTRACT
1. Please modify the aim of the study given in the abstract similar as stated in the manuscript.
2. I recommend to present OR with 95% CI also in the abstract. Present give exact p-values with 2-3 decimals, not only “p<0.005”, throughout the abstract and manuscript.

BACKGROUND
3. Please give reference (Haskell et al. 2007) on page 3, line 60, “...150 minutes week of...”.
4. The term “accurate awareness” seems odd to me.
5. There are some studies published concluding that believing themselves being inactive may reduce the motivation for MVPA...

METHODS

6. The definition of “accurate awareness”, how was accurate response defined, only when “5” on the five-point scale and 30 min MVPA seven days a week?

REFERENCES

7. Please give more information with respect to reference 23.

TABLES

8. Please use similar number of decimals in table 1 and 2.

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:

no competing interests