Reviewer's report

Title: The relationship between mild alcohol consumption and mortality in Koreans: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Version: 2  Date: 21 March 2015

Reviewer: Claire Mawditt

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions

1. There is some inconsistency in wording in relation to the level of alcohol consumption under investigation. The title refers to mild alcohol consumption [line 1], at times the article refers to both mild and moderate consumption [line 55 and figure 2]. Language should remain consistent.

2. Line 59 - remove “also” from the sentence “Rehm et al. also reported a significant influence of drinking on mortality with a J-shaped”.

3. Line 88 refers to the extraction of risk ratios from each study. However, the tables in figure 2 refer to odds ratios. This inconsistency needs to be clarified.

4. Line 131 refers to figure 2. It should be clarified which outcome, each table in figure 2, refers to. Replace “moderate” drinking with “mild” drinking for consistency. Should the table say odds ratios or risk ratios? (Line 88 refers to risk ratios).

5. The sentence on line 159-160 does not make sense and needs to be re-worded. “Cause of small number of studies in each outcome, statistical test did not conducted.”


7. Line 186 - replace the word “took”. This wording is incorrect. Possible replacement could be “accounted for”.

8. Line 186 - Remove the word “consequently”, this is not appropriate for the sentence because the factors mentioned in line 187 (age, sex, lifestyle) have not been mentioned previously.

9. Line 198 - A reference should be provided for the statement “high-dose ethanol increase mortality”.

10. Line 200 - states “the mechanism of alcohol on health”, this should be changed to the “biological mechanism” or “physiological mechanism”.
Discretionary Revisions

11. Line 113 refers to table 1. I have not been able to locate this table and review its contents.

12. Line 119 provides the duration of follow-up range. It may also be worth adding the sample size range at this point.

13. Lines 172-177 discuss the inconsistent criterion used to define mild alcohol consumption across the studies. However, this section does not state the implications of these differences both on the findings of the individual studies and the results of the meta-analysis. The Author’s should consider these implications and present them in this section.

14. Line 180 - Should social factors also be considered?

15. Line 200 - Have the authors considered social and psychological mechanisms of alcohol on health?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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’