Author's response to reviews

Title: More to Gain: Dietary Energy Density is Related to Smoking Status in US Adults

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Editor Comments:

(1) Please state in your 'Ethics approval and consent to participate' section whether the data used for your study is publicly available or whether you received permission, and from who, to us this.

Author response: We have added the line “The NHANES data is publically available” to this section. (line 245)

Reviewer reports:

Neal David Freedman (Reviewer 1): The authors have substantially improved the manuscript and it makes an important contribution to the literature.

I have a couple of minor comments.

The last sentence of the abstract is a little bit confusing: "Though former smokers had a higher dietary ED than never smokers, this difference still significantly lower than that of current smokers (p=0.002)." It would seem simpler to include the ED value for them (1.84) and write something like:

"Former smokers had a slightly lower ED value (1.84) than current non-daily smokers (1.89) but a higher value than than never smokers (1.79). In Figure 1, "non-smokers" should be relabeled with "never smokers" which is more clear."
Author response: Thank you for this thoughtful edit. Lines 22-23 have been changed as suggested.

We have changed Figure 1 to incorporate the “Never Smokers” label.

Finally, it seems like an important point that former smokers have a higher ED than never smokers, so this sentence in the discussion should be edited:

"The results also suggest that former smokers have comparable dietary ED to never smokers and better diets than current smokers, including those that only smoke occasionally." to indicate that former smokers have a somewhat higher ED than never smokers; especially as this difference appears statistically significant in figure 1.

Author response: Thank you again for this thoughtful edit. Line 232 has been edited to read: “The results also demonstrate that though former smokers have a higher dietary ED than never smokers, they have better diets than current smokers, including those that only smoke occasionally.”