Author’s response to reviews

Title: Association between intake of red and processed meat and the risk of heart failure: a meta-analysis

Authors:

Kun Cui (1026198819@qq.com)
Yabin Liu (185102230@qq.com)
Lingjun Zhu (541091012@qq.com)
Xia Mei (xiamei_2018@yeah.net)
Ping Jin (82547230@qq.com)
Yuhui Luo (luo_yuhui2017@yeah.net)

Version: 1 Date: 06 Sep 2018

Author’s response to reviews:

Technical Comments:

-Please provide all authors' email addresses within the title page of your manuscript.
  
  Reply: Thank you. We have provided all authors’ email in the title page.

-Please change the heading 'Introduction' to 'Background'.
  
  Reply: We have changed the heading 'Introduction' to 'Background'.

-Please change the heading 'Materials and Methods' to 'Methods'.
  
  Reply: We have changed the heading 'Materials and Methods' to 'Methods'.

-Please provide a 'Declarations' heading section.
  
  Reply: We have provided a 'Declarations' in our manuscript.
Editor Comments:

BMC Public Health operates a policy of open peer review, which means that you will be able to see the names of the reviewers who provided the reports via the online peer review system. We encourage you to also view the reports there, via the action links on the left-hand side of the page, to see the names of the reviewers.

Thank you.

Reviewer reports:

Maureen A. Murtaugh (Reviewer 1): Line 23 of page 7 of the pdf referring to where studies were conducted….. were come. Use one or the other…

Reply: OK. We have revised the sentence following your suggestion. Please see our revised manuscript.

Clarify this sentence. It doesn't make sense. Egger regression asymmetry test (P= 0.102) indicated that no publication was found in the analysis. Do the authors mean no publication bias?

Reply: Thank you for your careful review. It should be ‘publication bias’.

Pool result should be pooled results

Reply: Thank you for your careful review. We have revised the sentence.

In figure 2 it would be nice if the authors indicated American vs. European studies.

Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. We have provided Figure 2 and Figure 3 following your suggestion.

The paper never discusses potential differences in the amount of red or processed meat in the categories or the background diet that might influence the observed increase in risk associated with processed red meat. It would be helpful if European nations were identified in the discussion as their background diets could vary greatly.
Reply: Thank you. We have provided the detailed amounts of red and processed meat intake in the Table 1. We also discussed the background diets of European nations in the discussion section. Please see our revised manuscript.

Also, residual confounding related to other exposures associated with consumption of processed meat was not discussed.

Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. We have revised our manuscript.

Reviewer 2 (Reviewer 2): PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS: To view the full report from the academic peer reviewer, please see the attached file.

REVIEWER COMMENTS FROM REPORT: General impression: the paper addresses an important topic but there are some issues with the presentation, language and methods

Strengths:
- Significant topic
- General analytic approach is reasonable
- Use of different bibliographic databases to identify published studies is a strength

Thank you.

Weaknesses:
- Text needs heavy editing for English language to correct grammar and add clarity.

Reply: Thank you for your careful review. We have revised English language following a foreign student. Please see our revision.

- Additional information about the studies (method of HF ascertainment, method of dietary assessment) needs to be collected and reported.

Reply: Thank you. We have supplemented this information in Table 1.
- Some of the results are only presented in the discussion.

Reply: Thank you for your attention. We have listed these results in the results section.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

- In the introduction it would be beneficial to provide some evidence supporting the value of assessing the association between meat and heart failure—anything about mechanisms?

Reply: Thank you. We have supplemented the mechanisms about the association between meat and heart failure in the introduction.

- Was publication language and exclusion criteria? Mentioned in the Discussion but not the methods.

Reply: Thank you. We have mentioned publication language and exclusion criteria in the methods section. Please see our revised manuscript.

- Including a quantitative assessment of the quality of the studies in the meta-analysis may be useful.

Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. We have supplemented the quality of the studies in Table 1.

- The discussion mentions that meta-regression was used to evaluate sources of heterogeneity, but this is not described in the methods. Also, it should be moved to results.

Reply: Thank you. We have described the meta-regression in the methods and moved the meta-regression to results section following your suggestion.

- Consider adding tables or figures showing the results from meta-regression, the funnel plot for publication bias, and the sensitivity analysis removing one study at a time.

Reply: Thank you. We have provided these results as supplementary material.
ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

None