Reviewer's report:

Title: Cardiovascular risk management in patients with active Ankylosing Spondylitis: a detailed evaluation

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Reviewer: Miguel A. Gonzalez-Gay

This is a very informative population-based study that makes clear that classic cardiovascular risk factors are more prevalent among ankylosing spondylitis (AS) patients than in the general population.

The rationale of the study is good, in line with the extensive experience of this group of experts in the field. Observational studies like this are of great value as they highlight the increased underlying atherogenic burden that is present in patients with spondyloarthritis. These data are useful for general practitioners in general and rheumatologists in particular. Of main relevance was to disclose that many patients with AS do not achieve cardiovascular risk targets for the management of cardiovascular risk factors. Therefore, I entirely agree on these researchers on the need of optimal cardiovascular risk assessment and tight control of cardiovascular risk factors in patients with AS.

Cardiovascular risk assessed according to the European guidelines that is nicely shown in Table 3 is in line with the data that we have found in our Southern European population.

The idea of adding 15 years to better establish the cardiovascular risk in AS patients seems to be very reasonable. I am in favor of this proposal as risk charts in general underestimate the actual CV risk of patients with inflammatory arthritis. It may be especially true when we deal with relatively young individuals as a young age put them in a category of low cardiovascular risk that sometimes is not true.

I would like to make a couple of minor comments that by no means reduce the relevance of this study.

Please, state (whether applicable) that the results on BASDAI (mean 5.9) shown in Table 1 were obtained prior to the onset of anti-TNF therapy.

Introduction: To emphasize the higher frequency of subclinical atherosclerosis found in AS patients when compared with controls, discuss a study that disclosed increased risk of subclinical atherosclerosis, including a higher frequency of carotid plaques in patients with AS without clinical history of cardiovascular events compared with matched controls. Use for this purpose the following article published by Gonzalez-Juanatey et al in Medicine Baltimore in 2009 (Gonzalez-Juanatey C, et al. The high prevalence of subclinical atherosclerosis in patients with ankylosing spondylitis without clinically evident cardiovascular disease. Medicine (Baltimore) 2009 Nov;88(6):358-65).
This article might be used as reference 10 in the revised manuscript.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest 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:**

I do not have conflict of interest.