Author’s response to reviews

Title: Elevated serum levels of aminotransferases in relation to unhealthy foods intake: Tehran Lipid and Glucose Study

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Editor Comments

C1. The paper could be published after point by point answers to questions posed by reviewers. Putting all carbohydrates in the same group can be a confusing factor. Why not separate simple sugars from complex carbohydrates?

R: Agreed. We would like to thank the Editor for good points. In the revised manuscript we have included simple sugars and complex carbohydrate, separately (Table 2, page 18, and page 8, line 22).

C2. Given the importance of diet in the development of NAFLD, it would be useful to also analyze the impact on aminotrasferases of other fundamental foods such as fruits, vegetables and legumes (main sources of micronutrients), since other authors underlined a role in the pathology (Treatment of NAFLD with diet, physical activity and exercise. Manuel Romero-Gómez, Shira Zelber-Sagi, Michael Trenell. 2017).

R: We would like to thank the reviewer for good points, the impact of dietary patterns and food groups such as fruits and vegetables on aminotranferases was assessed in our population and published in another paper previously (http://ijem.sbu.ac.ir/browse.php?a_code=A-10-197-1&sid=1&slc_lang=en).

C3. Results are clear but it would be better to describe more the differences between the groups in terms of caloric intake and percentage of macronutrients with the details shown in table 2.

R: Agreed. In the revised manuscript we have included more about dietary differences of two groups in terms of simple sugars and complex carbohydrate, saturated fats, mono- and poly-unsaturated fat, and cholesterol (Table 2). Also, the differences shown in Table 2 have been described in more details in text (page 8, lines 20-23 and page 9, lines 1-3).
C4. In the methods section the inclusion and the exclusion criteria were not mentioned

R: Agreed and added in the revised manuscript (page 5, lines 9-13).

C5. Were there any diabetics among the participants? Were they using any medication that can alter the transaminase levels?

R: Agreed. Yes, there were 48 cases of diabetes in the population (11% of total population). The aim of the current study was not to assess the relationship in healthy population, although according to the reviewer suggestion, we additionally adjusted diabetes status in the models (Table 3 & 4, pages 19& 20, and page 9, line 12 and 17).

C6. It would be better if the other parameters related with metabolic syndrome were evaluated concurrently such as triglycerides, HDL and HOMA index

R: Agreed. Mean ± SD of serum levels of TG and HDL have been added to the Table 1 (page 17), they have not shown any significant differences between two groups. Although we did not have information about HOMA index.

C7. There are many spelling errors and typhos which need to be checked

R: Agreed and corrected.

C8. What is definition of unhealthy food which is repeated throughout the article?

R: As mentioned in the manuscript (page 2 in abstract, page 5, page 10), unhealthy foods defined as fast foods, soft drinks, sweet and salty snacks in our study.