Reviewer’s report

Title: Women born with very low birth weight have similar menstrual cycle pattern, pregnancy rates and hormone profiles compared with women born at term

Version: 0 Date: 28 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Nanette Santoro

Reviewer's report:

The authors have attempted to perform a very difficult study and have provided some new and useful data despite several shortcomings in the approach which diverge from the ideal. The purpose of the manuscript is to describe reproductive health parameters in 27-28 year old women who were born at very low birth weight. The sample size is too small to draw firm conclusions, but as noted above this is an extraordinarily difficult study to complete and therefore any information is welcome about the topic. Nonetheless, there are several clarifications that the authors need to provide to allow a reader to interpret the data.

1. There are two ways to be born at VLBW: either one is born very prematurely or one is severely small for gestational age. It is not clear how many of the women who underwent hormonal assessment were in each category. While the sample size is overall small, it would be helpful to distinguish these two groups because they may have different reproductive parameters.

2. Reproductive hormones drawn at random throughout the menstrual cycle have very limited value for comparison purposes given the very large fluctuations across the menstrual cycle. This should be specifically acknowledged as a limitation of interpretation. AMH levels, on the other hand, vary far less across the menstrual cycle and are a more valid measurement.

3. Pages 5-6, lines 143-159 are confusing, as are page 8 lines 180-185. Line 142: The 25 women using hormonal contraception are subtracted from the overall 49? Please be more specific. The 'misunderstanding' alluded to on line 145 is also unclear. Does this mean that the 25 women using hormonal contraception did not have an AMH determination? If so, then please simply say so. Please specify that menstrual cycle data was NOT utilized for women using hormonal contraception. On lines 180-185, the numbers do not seem to add up correctly. Please clarify. If 80 girls were enrolled at both, and 49 participated in follow up, the number two completed questionnaires and the number who completed both questionnaires and hormone determinations should be explicitly derived. How the numbers go from 49 on line 180 to 45 on line 185 seems to be an impossible calculation. Please clarify.
4. If p<0.05 is taken as statistically significant, then the systolic blood pressure differences between the two groups bears comment (Table 2).

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

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