Author’s response to reviews

Title: Development and Relative Validation of a Food Frequency Questionnaire for French-Canadian Adolescent and Young Adult Survivors of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia

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Reviewer reports:

Thank you for your revisions and your extensive point-by-point reply (which is always appreciated by reviewers and editors). Your manuscript has now been re-reviewed by one of our statistical reviewers who has the following feedback:

Reviewer #3: This is an interesting paper about the development and relative validation of an interviewed-administered FFQ for a specific population (i.e., French Canadian adolescent and young adult survivors of acute lymphoblastic leukemia). On overall, the paper is clear and well written and the reviewer has the following comments:

We would like to thank the statistical reviewer for his/her encouraging comments regarding our manuscript. He/she will find below the point-by-point answers to his/her comments.
Comment: Table 1: Please could you clarify the units for white bread, rice and whole-grain bread?

Response: The unit for white bread is 1 slice and, for rice 1 cup and for whole-grain bread 5 slices. This information was added in Table 1.

Comment: Lines 110-111: The reviewer is confused as to what n=80 refers to. Did the 80 participants for the validity testing completed FFQ and 3-DFR at phase I or II; or the phase did not matter as long as at least one FFQ and at least 3-DFR were completed?

Response: It is the latter, the phase did not matter as long as at least one FFQ and the associated 3-DFR in the same phase were fully completed. For clarification, the sentence has been modified.

«A total of 80 FFQs and the associated 3-DFRs were selected in phase 1 or phase 2 for the validation, n=40 for each FFQ interviewer (10 men, 10 boys, 10 women and 10 girls).» (lines 110-112)

Comment: Lines 208-210: The reviewer understands that ICCs were calculated with crude data, instead of energy-adjusted data, due to the small sample size (n=29) in the reproducibility testing. However, for the usual reader, this rationale may not be obvious. Please could you add a sentence explaining this rationale for clarity?

Rational: We agree with your comment. We added the following sentence explaining the rationale for not using the energy-adjusted data to calculate the ICCs.

« Energy-adjusted values were not used to calculate intraclass correlation coefficients because, due to the small sample size (n=29), any modification in the composition of diet would greatly impact the residual values and the correlation coefficients.» (line 210-213)

Comment: Line 228: Does recall rate mean response rate?

Response: Yes, it should have been response rate instead of recall rate. It was corrected in line 231.
Comment: Lines 260-261: Minor typo, it should be CHO instead of glucose.

Response: Thank you for your vigilance, it was corrected in line 264.

Comment: Table 3 (Footnote 1): This is either a typo or a misunderstanding of how the difference % should be calculated. It should be calculated as follows (at the individual level first): (Daily intake as per FFQ - Daily intake as per 3-FDR) / (Daily intake as per 3-DFR) * 100. Then from that result, the authors can calculate medians and IQRs for each nutrient. Please make changes accordingly on Tables 3, 5 and in the supplementary materials.

Response: It was indeed a typo error. As explained by the reviewer, the difference % was calculated at the individual level at first and then medians and IQRs for each nutrient were calculated. The formulas in Tables 3, 5 were corrected accordingly. The formula in the supplementary materials was in the right format.

Comment: Figure 1: Minor typo in the box for "Reproducibility of FFQ", it should be n=29 instead of n=58.

Response: Thank you for your vigilance. Figure 1 was modified accordingly.

Comment: Supplementary tables 1-8: Minor typo in footnotes, it should be median (IQR) instead of means ± SD.

Response: Supplementary tables 1-8 were corrected. Furthermore, in the main manuscript in the section Additional file, the titles of the Supplementary Tables 1-10 were corrected.