Author’s response to reviews

Title: Dietary patterns in relation to testosterone levels and severity of impaired kidney function among middle-aged and elderly men in Taiwan: a cross-sectional study

Authors:

Adi Kurniawan (adilukaskurniawan@yahoo.com)
Chien-Yeh Hsu (cyhsu@ntunhs.edu.tw)
Hsiao-Hsien Rau (hh.rau@jct.org.tw)
Li-Yin Lin (jlin11025@gmail.com)
Jane Chao (chenjui@tmu.edu.tw)

Version: 2 Date: 05 Jul 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

RESPONSES TO THE EDITOR’S AND REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

Reviewer #3: The authors have addressed correctly the most part of my comments. I suggest them to add again some precisions:

1. Please add indications as regard the obtained CV based on the measured quality control samples. Or, just indicate if the measurement performances met the desired specifications (RICOS or those of the French Society of Clinical Biology) for example.

REPLY: We revised the text as follows: “The laboratory followed Westgard multi-rules for sample quality control and the measurements met the desired specifications” (lines 139-140).

2. Please specify if the physical activity questionnaire was validated prior to its use or not?

REPLY: We revised the text as follows; “A structured questionnaire used to collect demographic and lifestyle data in this study was validated prior to its use” (lines 167-168).

Editor: We appreciate the efforts in editing the language but a lot of inaccuracies remain.
1. The tenses should be checked. There are plenty of typological errors, e.g. 1.59 "less than 4% *ARE* aware of this disease.". 1.82 the word "also" is repeated twice. 1.82 and 90 "the previous study" should be "a previous study". I cannot go on and list them all, the manuscript should be checked and edited again.

REPLY: We have asked two individuals who are fluent in English to revise the language in the manuscript.

2. The added sentence in the abstract about the sample size is unclear and should read "Of these 21,376 men, 256 men had available measurements of testosterone levels".

REPLY: We have revised it accordingly as follows: “Among 21,376 men, 256 men had available measurements of testosterone levels” (line 34).

3. In the flow chart, the selection of the 256 "testosterone sample" is missing.

REPLY: We have revised it accordingly in Figure 1.

4. The word "decrease" to replace "decline" in kidney function may not be the best choice and maybe "impaired" would have been more appropriate.

REPLY: We have revised it accordingly in the text.

5. Please replace "subjects" by "men" in most places, so that it is clear at any point of the manuscript that the study population are only male subjects.

REPLY: We have revised it accordingly in the text.

6. 1.226 please change to "after multivariable adjustment"

REPLY: We have revised it accordingly.

7. The paragraph 1.212 - 231 should go after the paragraph on dietary patterns because the sample size keeps changing otherwise.
REPLY: We have revised it accordingly.

8. The dietary patterns were derived using the data from the full sample, whereas the testosterone analysis is on a very small subset (1% of the full sample!). This should appear more clearly in the list of limitations in the discussion.

REPLY: We have added this limitation in the Discussion section as follows: “Moreover, we used the data from the full sample to derive dietary patterns, whereas the testosterone analysis was conducted on a very small subset (1.2% of the full sample)” (lines 402-404).

Authors:

1. Additionally, we revised CRP levels in Table 1 because it was converted to the wrong values. It should be multiplied by 95.24 to convert CRP levels from mg/dL to nmol/L (it was previously multiplied by 9.524).

2. We also added the footnotes for Table 3, because it was previously missing.