Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 0 Date: 10 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Dinesh Jeyakumaran

Reviewer's report:

It is an interesting article, highlighting the dietary link to kidney function.

The number of subjects included in this analysis with readings on levels of testosterone is very low, only 256. And it severely affects the outcome/ findings.

Thus it should not highlight levels of testosterone as the main area of study. Better to limit the article to describe the finding with dietary patterns and kidney function levels.

Why the CKD was defined as associated with low testosterone levels? not clear.

The selection criteria is limited to people with kidney disease (with proteinuria), thus the level of eGFR may varies according to the underlying cause / primary illness (ex-NCDs etc.) Therefore, care must be taken to attribute the association to dietary patterns and it is generalisable to people with chronic kidney disease only.

Ideal is to include people without proteinuria to find the real association between diet and kidney function.

It is useful to include a discussion point to highlight the limitation in the temporal association with the diet pattern and the kidney function decline. As the diet we observe in this population could be affected by the dietary advises given due to the underlying conditions (DM, CVDs, etc).

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

No competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal