Author's response to reviews

Title: Characteristics of the first metatarsophalangeal joint in gout and asymptomatic hyperuricaemia: a cross-sectional observational study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
RE: MS:1603530699178301 Characteristics of the first metatarsophalangeal joint in gout and asymptomatic hyperuricaemia: a cross-sectional observational study

15/07/2015

To the editors of the Journal of Foot and Ankle Research,

Thank you for reviewing our manuscript. The following issues have been amended:

1. Title: add *observational* to *cross-sectional study* (i.e. cross-sectional observational study) in the title and the abstract (i.e. in the methods section of the abstract. Please note that you MUST also change this in the title box of the JFAR online system (i.e. in the box where you enter the title of your manuscript. This is critical to ensure it is properly registered in PubMed.

   The title and abstract now read “cross-sectional observational study”.

2. Abstract: amend headings (e.g. Background, Methods, etc) so they each start on a new line and have a colon, rather than a full-stop directly after the heading (as per JFAR style).

   The abstract headings each start on a new line followed by a colon.

3. Abstract and the rest of the manuscript: change all p-values to 3 decimal places (note anything more than or equal to 0.001 should be exact, otherwise if less that p<0.001 state as p<0.001. For example, p<0.050 and p<0.002 should both be p=0.050 and p=0.002, and p=0.0002 should be p<0.001. In addition, change all ORs to 1 decimal place only. Please amend and check these carefully throughout the manuscript and tables for consistency.

   All p values have been rounded to 3 decimal places and odds ratios to 1 decimal place in the abstract, results section and tables.

4. Background and the rest of the manuscript: please remove the abbreviation AH and just use *asymptomatic hyperuricaemia*. AH is not a well-known abbreviation and as the readers of JFAR are mostly clinicians we would prefer this not to be abbreviated.

   All AH abbreviations have been removed and replaced with “asymptomatic hyperuricaemia” throughout the manuscript including the tables.

5. Methods and the rest of the manuscript: if using the term *data*, please change to *data were*, rather than *data was* as data is plural.
The term “data was” has been changed to “data were” throughout the manuscript.

6. Heading *Patient-reported outcomes*, 1st sentence: add a space between a number and an abbreviated unit of measurement (e.g. 100 mm). Please ensure this for all instances of measurement. In addition, change *Visual Analog Scales* to Visual Analogue Scales (i.e. use UK English throughout the manuscript).

A space has been added after 100 in “100mm”, after 0.41 in “0.41mmol/L”, after 22 in “22°C”. The word Analog has been changed to “Analogue”.

7. Page 6, last sentence of 1st paragraph: you have written, *Three repeated measurements of right and left feet were taken*, however you have not indicated if these three measures were then averaged? Please clarify by adding to this sentence.

Repeated measurements were not averaged but included as separate observations in the mixed effects model. This approach yields identical results to an analysis of averaged measurements in the simplest cases, but allows more complex covariance structures where necessary, and also automatically accounts for the weights of the averages when there are missing values.

To maintain readability, we addressed issues 7., 8. and 9. with a single sentence at the end of the Clinician-assessed outcomes section: “Where repeated measurements were taken, they were not averaged, but instead included as separate observations in the analysis as described below.”

In the Data analysis section, we made a correction to the 7th sentence (the participant-specific random effect had been inadvertently omitted) and changed the 8th sentence to: “This analysis produces results identical to an analysis of measures averaged for each foot-side that would allow for a between-foot-side correlation, and also allows for any reweighting required due to missing values.”

8. Page 6, last sentence of second paragraph: you have written, *Three consecutive contractions of three to five seconds were recorded for each muscle group for each foot.*?same issue as item 7 above.

See above response

9. Page 7: the same issue as items 7 and 8 above needs to be addressed for the section on *temperature*.

See above response

10. Page 7, second last sentence: please add a comma before the word *which* when you have used *which to begin a secondary part of a sentence. For example, on page 7 you write, *When three trials were undertaken to measure an outcome, the model accounted for these time-based repeated-measures using a scaled identity repeated covariance structure which assumed the repeated-measures were independent and shared a common variance.*
Please add a comma after the word *structure* and before the word *which*. Do this for all similar sentences throughout the manuscript. In some circumstances where you have used the word *which* but you do not think it should have a comma before it (i.e. if you are introducing an *adjective clause*), then you most likely need to use the word *that* instead.

*Commas have been placed before the word “which” throughout the manuscript.*

11. Page 11, Discussion section, 2nd sentence: amend *our* participants to *participants in this study*? please ensure that you do this for other examples of this in the manuscript, particularly the rest of the Discussion section. The word *our* denotes ownership of the participants, which is not the reality of what occurred in the study.

*When referring the participants in the study, the word “our” has been removed and replaced with “participants in this study”.*

12. Page 12, 1st sentence of the *limitations* section: suggest adding the word *several* before the word *limitations* (i.e. *in light of several limitations.*).

*The word “several” has been added.*

13. Page 12, 2nd sentence of the *limitations* section: change *generalizable* to generalisable* (i.e. UK English).

*The sentence now reads “…generalisable…”.*

14. Reference list: please ensure all page ranges are included for each reference as per JFAR referencing style. Please ensure that references are exactly as that requested in the guidelines for authors.

*Article issue numbers have been removed and replaced with page ranges as per JFAR referencing style.*

Sincerely,

Sarah Stewart