Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prevalence and associated factors of subclinical atherosclerosis in rheumatoid arthritis at the university hospital of Kinshasa.

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Detailed answers to the reviewers of manuscript BRHM-D-17-00039

Prevalence and associated factors of subclinical atherosclerosis in rheumatoid arthritis at the university hospital of Kinshasa.

We begin by thanks the editor for his comments. We have tried to address the points raised as much as possible below and in the manuscript.

- In the methods please point out step by step all analyses. Have you used a stepward or forward conditional regression model or did you put all variables that have been significant in the model? Please describe the overall fit of your regression model in the results. Please run the regression again with a forward conditional model and report p-values for entry and exclusion of variables.
A/ we thank the editor for this question; we did a stepward conditional regression model. See table 4 which combines univariate and multivariate analyses.

- When referring to table 4 you mention associations of subclinical atherosclerosis, although you performed a comparison test. Please change to differences between groups

A/ we agree with the editor, this paragraph has been changed in the text. See page 5, line 3

- Can you please explain the difference in results of table 3 and 4. This is not clear by reading your text. Please also explain the abbr. ATS in brackets the first time you use it in the text. Would you say that you can delete one of your tables?

A/ we agree with the editor, table 4 has been deleted and incorporated in table 3

- Referring to a previous comment about subanalyses according to tertiles of disease activity since they range from 0 to 12. You commented about the age of patients in your response, which was not related to the question. Please rerun the tests separately for the patients divided by disease duration.

A/ thank you for this suggestion. We looked again at our data taking into account about disease duration. No significant differences were found depending disease duration between patients with atherosclerosis and those without atherosclerosis. As the general conclusion was not changed we did not add this information in the text

- Since you use different cutoff in your population I advise you to more strongly highlight the different conditions in patients from Kinshasa, which presents your study easier to differentiate to others of its kind.

A/ we thank the editor for this suggestion. As for the cutoff used in our population, most of them are derive from local studies. We use them in our routine practice.