

Author's response to reviews

Title: Dietary patterns in clinical subtypes of multiple sclerosis: an exploratory study

Authors:

Geeta SM Ramsaransing (j.schortinghuis@kchir.umcg.nl)

Sanne A Mellema (samellema@hotmail.com)

Jaques HA De Keyser (j.h.a.de.keyser@neuro.umcg.nl)

Version: 3 **Date:** 20 June 2009

Author's response to reviews:

Nutrition Journal

Dr Nehme Gabriel, MD

Editor-in-Chief

Chief of Medicine

Leesburg Regional Medical Center

& Medical Director, MedSource Nutrition Center

Lady Lake

Florida

United States

Groningen, June 20, 2009

Subject: electronic submission revised version of 'Dietary patterns in clinical subtypes of multiple sclerosis: an exploratory study',

Dear Dr. Gabriel,

Thank you for the opportunity to revise the manuscript according to the reviewers' comments for a second time. Please find as electronic file the revised version of 'Dietary patterns in clinical subtypes of multiple sclerosis: an exploratory study'. The reviewers' comments are addressed as follows:

Reviewer K. Spach

- The manuscript has been closely checked for spelling and grammatical errors.

- Table 2. has been adjusted according to the comments.
- More emphasis on comparison with general population: more emphasis has been put on this in the discussion.

Reviewer S. Schwarz

About control group: as reviewer Schwarz emphasizes, the results of our study and comparison with the general population 'are exploratory, and should be seen in this light'.

We totally agree with this statement and that is precisely the reason why we put the phrase '...:an exploratory study' in the title of the article.

The limited group size seems a point for both reviewers.

We agree that the groups are limited in size; it was very difficult to find enough patients that could be included in this study. However, we feel that the results are interesting and should be presented to public for three important reasons:

- First, despite the relatively small group size, we did find highly significant differences, even after the stringent Bonferroni correction that should be used in cases where multiple measurements are compared.
- Second, a scientific finding is made more valid if the results can be repeated. Our study should serve as an invitation to other researchers investigating diet in MS patients to assess if our results can be repeated.
- Third, we feel that our data should be available freely to others to perform, for example, a review or a meta analysis. There are not many studies on diet and MS so every data based on sound research is of worth and should be available.

We feel that the quality of the revised paper has improved and hope it will be suitable for publication.

Please let me know if you need any more information,

Awaiting your reply, I remain,

Sincerely,

Dr. G. Ramsaransing

Correspondence should be addressed to:

G. Ramsaransing

Email: j.schortinghuis@kchir.umcg.nl