

July 11, 2014

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed our edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 10698-Revisions 07-11-14 uploaded).

Title: Fecal Microbes, Short Chain Fatty Acids, and Colorectal Cancer across Racial/Ethnic Groups

Author: Christina M. Hester, Venkatakrisna R. Jala , Morgan G.I. Langille, Shahid Umar, K. Allen Greiner, Bodduluri Haribabu

Name of Journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS Manuscript NO: 10698

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated.

2 Revisions have been made according to the suggestions of the reviewers.

(1) Reviewer 02454257:

- In response to the first reviewer's recommendation, we have shortened the Introduction. We have removed information that was not necessary for the Introduction and have moved other information to the Discussion.
- We have put more emphasis on the small scale of our work to emphasize that it is a pilot and that our findings are meant to be built upon, not used for generalization. We have added language about the small study size and pilot

nature to the Introduction, Materials and Methods, and Discussion sections, as well as in the Comments.

- To ensure readers can understand the power of our sample size to detect differences in our variables of interest, we have added the power analysis to the Statistical Analysis section, indicating that our sample was a pre-determined size. We determined the power to detect differences in total SCFA levels with our known sample size of twenty participants. We approximated a “population average” for total SCFA levels and standard deviation with data from other in-progress studies our team is running.
- We have addressed some of the major limitations of the study in a new paragraph in the Discussion. Study size, age and education level distribution among the racial/ethnic groups, and having 70% women in the study were primarily the result of our convenience sampling. We did not collect socioeconomic information such as household income, but we have acknowledged that future work should take this into account.
- We have modified our Discussion to frame our results as more preliminary and worthy of follow-up so as not to claim that our results are definitely generalizable.

(2) Reviewer 02441672:

- As indicated above, we have added discussion of the limitations of our study. We have addressed that socioeconomic factors (such as household income) were not accounted for in our study and could influence the racial/ethnic differences we observed.
- As indicated above, we have added discussion of the small sample size and have added a power analysis to the Statistical Analysis section.

(3) Reviewer 00068832:

- We have acknowledged that our sample is small and that our findings are preliminary and not generalizable. However, we argue that our findings are interesting, relevant, and should be expanded upon, particularly as the

African Americans in our study had lower SCFAs and higher levels of bacteria associated with CRC.

(4) Reviewer 00058482:

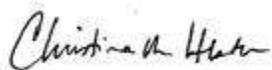
- As described above, we have added more discussion of the small scale and pilot nature of the study throughout the manuscript.
- As described above, we have added the power analysis to the Statistical Analysis section, determining the power with our small sample size. (Details under the response to the first reviewer.)
- As described above, we have addressed some of the major limitations of the study in a new paragraph in the Discussion. (Details under the response to the first reviewer.)
- We have modified our Discussion and written the Comments with more emphasis on the small size of this study and the preliminary nature of our findings.

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3 References and typesetting were corrected.

Please contact me with any further concerns or questions. Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the World Journal of Gastroenterology.

Sincerely yours,



Christina M. Hester, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Research Assistant Professor

Department of Family Medicine

MS3064

4125 Rainbow Boulevard

Kansas City, Kansas 66160

913-945-6733

chester@kumc.edu