

## RESPONSE LETTER

### Editor's suggestions

- 1 Please offer the postcode! Thank you!
  - **Done**
- 2 Please offer the postcode! Thank you!
  - **The postcode is present**
- 3 Please offer signed pdf files. Thank you!
  - **signed pdf file has been offered**
- 4 Any manuscript describing a study (basic research and clinical research) that used biostatistics must include a statement in the Materials and Methods section affirming that the statistical review of the study was performed by a biomedical statistician. Statistical review is performed before the submission or after peer-review. The author invites an expert in Biomedical Statistics to evaluate the statistical method(s) used in the study, including but not limited to the *t*-test (group or paired comparisons), chi-square test, ridit, probit, logit and regression (linear, curvilinear, or stepwise) modeling, correlation, analysis of variance, and analysis of covariance. The review by the biomedical statistician is conducted with respect to the following points: (1) Statistical methods are adequately and appropriately described when they are used to verify the results; (2) Whether the statistical techniques are suitable or correct; (3) Only homogeneous data can be averaged. Standard deviations are preferred to standard errors. The number of observations and subjects (*n*) is given. Losses in observations, such as drop-outs from the study, are reported; (4) Values, such as ED50, LD50 and IC50, have the 95% confidence limits calculated and have been compared by weighted probit modeling (using the functions described by Bliss and Finney); and (5) The word "significantly" is replaced by its synonyms (if it indicates extent) or the *P* value (if it indicates statistical significance). In addition, a copy of any approval document(s)/letter(s) or waiver should be provided to the BPG in PDF format.

- **a statement in the Materials and Methods section affirming that the statistical review of the study was performed by a biomedical statistician has been added**
- **in addition, a copy of the approval letter has been be provided to the BPG in PDF format**

5 Please offer the audio core tip, the requiriment are as follows:

In order to attract readers to read your full-text article, we request that the first author make an audio file describing your final core tip. This audio file will be published online, along with your article. Please submit audio files according to the following specifications:

Acceptable file formats: .mp3, .wav, or .aiff

Maximum file size: 10 MB

To achieve the best quality, when saving audio files as an mp3, use a setting of 256 kbps or higher for stereo or 128 kbps or higher for mono. Sampling rate should be either 44.1 kHz or 48 kHz. Bit rate should be either 16 or 24 bit. To avoid audible clipping noise, please make sure that audio levels do not exceed 0 dBFS.

- **the audio core tip has been offered**

**Reviewer's code: 00039368**

- This is a well written meta-analysis paper concerning the elucidation of a potential involvement of H. pylori infection in the pathogenesis of asthma based on analysis of 14 papers selected from 169 publications. The authors give the extensive characteristics of selected studies; give the overview about the prevalence of H. pylori infection in patients with diagnosed asthma and controls and analyzed the association between H. pylori infection, gastritis and bronchial asthma in pediatric and adult population. The authors present detailed description of inclusion and exclusion criteria applied to select literature and used the appropriate statistical methods. The present meta-analysis showed the potential involvement of H. pylori infection in the pathogenesis of asthma. The authors discussed well the possible pathogenetic mechanisms of inverse association between H. pylori

infection and asthma. The strength point of analysis is the inclusion of studies based on examination of pediatric as well as adult populations. The authors have reviewed and analyzed sufficient amount of literature. The review is supplied with one Table and one figures.

- **We thanks the reviewer for his flattering comments**

**Reviewer's code: 00227386**

- PAGE 3. Under 'RESULTS'. It says that 14 articles have been selected but the Tables only include 13. Only 7 of these have been included for meta-analysis – the reason for this is not clear.
- **The table include 14 article; the meta-analysis consists of 7 studies because in 7 of the 14 studies has been reported the prevalence of H. pylori infection both in the asthma population and in the control population, data that are essential to calculate the relative risk to develop asthma in people affected by H. pylori infection**
- PAGE 6 Literature Search PubMed has been omitted from the list of the research.
- **PubMed® provides free access to MEDLINE**
- PAGE 7 Statistical analysis Reference 10 has been omitted.
- **The Reference 10 refers to MATERIALS AND METHODS Literature search PRISMA statement guidelines**
- PAGE 8 'Paediatric population' 5 papers are referred to. It would be clearer if these were given numerically e.g. 1,2,3,4,5. The paragraph referring to the Russian study and not included in the above 5 (Ref. 11) is not really relevant and would be better omitted.
- **Numerical order has been used; the Russian study has been omitted**
- PAGE 9. A) Again these results should be given numerically, numbering from 1 to 8. B) Last paragraph. The paragraph referring to a Dutch population (Ref 17) is not included in the Table and could be omitted.

- **Numerical order has been used; The paragraph referring to a Dutch population (Ref 17) has been omitted**
- PAGE 10 The paper referred to under Ref No 20 is not in the Table and relates only to subjects with symptoms suggestive of asthma and would be better omitted
- **The paper referred to under Ref No 20 has been omitted**
- TABLE Pages 12-14. a)The Table would be better separated into two halves, Table 1 'Paediatric' and Table 2 'Adults'. b)What is meant by 'Value' in the last column?
- **The table has been separated into two halves; in the last column is reported the quality of the studies as defined in the "Risk of Bias" paragraph**
- PAGE 11.Last paragraph (Ref 28) This refers to a peptic ulcer population and not to a control group and would be better omitted.
- **The (Ref 28) has been omitted**
- PAGES 14,15 'Meta-analysis a)As mentioned above an explanation is needed as to why only 7 of the 15 listed in the Table(s) were subjected to meta-analysis. b)A separate paragraph is needed to give a fuller explanation of 'relative risk' which shows a significant difference between the two groups.
- **Done; the difference is not statistically significant (P = 0.15)**
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE The English language is good but there are several idiomatic errors which need correcting
- **Done**

**Reviewer's code: 00503623**

- There are some minor problems in the "Abstract", especially the sentence under "Conclusion" which need your attention.
- **This sentence has been rewritten**

**Reviewer's code: 03009708**

- A minor changes in English and its abstract. Also new straight conclusion can shape the paper better.
- **Minor changes in English has been done; the “Conclusion” section of the abstract has been rewritten**

**Reviewer’s code: 00051367**

- it requires a little improvement in the chapter about the influence of MRGE. Since H.pylori and MRGE usually are associated by an inverse relationship some results could be influenced
- **The chapter has been improved**

**Reviewer’s code: 00036517**

- The number of sample size for meta analysis is too small. Authors wrote that their analysis authors studied 8852 subjects, but authors changed the sample size for analysis. Authors cannot reach the result of the relationship between H. pylori infection and asthma
- **The meta analysis includes  $1542 + 7310 = 8852$  subjects**
- The style of this manuscript seems review not meta-analysis
- **The aim of the manuscript is to do a systematic review of the literature and then a meta-analysis of the data about the prevalence of H. pylori infection in the asthma population and in the control population**
- All Helicobacter pylori and H. pylori should be in italic.
- **done**