

11st December 2019

Dear Editor,

We would like to thank you for considering the publication of our work in the World Journal of Gastroenterology. We are truly grateful to yours and your reviewer's critical comments and suggestions.

Based on these, we have made careful modifications on the original manuscript.

We hope the new manuscript will meet your journal's standard. Below you will find our point-by-point responses to the reviewers' comments which have been detailed in the revised manuscript. All changes made to the text are in red color.

Reviewer #1:

**1. The paper is interesting and well written.**

**Response:** *We thank the Reviewer for the recognition of our work.*

**2. Study population: the authors should discuss more characteristics of the study population at baseline. For example, NICE recommendation are about adoption of FIT in primary care for symptomatic patients without rectal bleeding. By contrast, a large proportion of study patients performed colonoscopy because of rectal bleeding. It seems that selection of study population is skewed towards more severe symptoms and a higher risk of CRC cancer with respect to an "ideal" population identified by NICE guidelines**

**Response:** *We thank the Reviewer for this comment. We agree with your remark and completed our discussion in the revised manuscript.*

**3. Author discuss the high risk of CRC cancer found in study patients after a negative colonoscopy, but limits in study size prevented them to further investigate determinants of such risk. However, I think that two parallel analyses should be carried out to assess risk/rates of CRC and the**

**association with a positive FIT after excluding subjects with advanced adenoma, and all subjects with SCL**

**Response:** *Thank you for your suggestion. We have added the results of this analyses in Figures 5 and 6 and we have inserted additional discussion in the text.*

**4. Authors should check the manuscript for minor typesetting, for example to provide in the Abstract the full words of the abbreviation SCL**

**Response:** *Thank you for your advice, we have checked our manuscript and we have added the full name in the abstract.*

Finally, we would like to thank you and your reviewer for your helpful suggestions to improve our work and for taking the time to read our manuscript. We hope that we have addressed these issues adequately and that you will find our revised manuscript suitable for publication in the World Journal of Gastroenterology.

Sincerely,

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