

March 10, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 2144-revision.doc).

**Old Title:** Short-term probiotic supplementation decreases intestinal transit time in adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

**New Title:** Probiotic supplementation decreases intestinal transit time: meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

**Author:** Larry E. Miller and Arthur C. Ouwehand

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 2144

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

**Reviewer 00070626 Comments**

Considering the high prevalence of functional GI disorders nowadays and the numerous studies on the role of probiotics in treating such conditions it is important to know where we stand. This meta-analysis demonstrates the efficacy of probiotic supplementation in improving intestinal transit time. It is very well written, with methods clearly presented. Conclusions are drawn regarding the clinical importance of these findings and their relevance to clinical trials design, representing valuable information. A minor comment would be to check the references for possible missing citation numbers, for example ref no. 8.

**Authors' Response**

We thank you for volunteering your time to conduct this review and appreciate your positive comments. Reference #8 is formatted correctly; this journal is not indexed in Medline and, therefore, no PMID number is available.

**Reviewer 01800545 Comments**

This systematic review included most of studies with a small number of patients, which the authors also detected. And most of studies could not be reliable in the view of statistical analysis.

**Authors' Response**

Thank you for your very helpful comments. We agree with the reviewer that many of the included studies had small sample sizes. The strength of a meta-analysis is that the weaknesses of a single trial with a small sample size can be overcome by combining data from all trials into a robust dataset. In fact, this meta-analysis describes outcomes from 464 distinct subjects, which is sufficient to conduct a reliable meta-analysis and associated subgroup analyses.

**Manuscript Formatting Changes**

- Title was shortened to less than 12 words
- Author affiliation formatting was changed
- Abstract Aim shortened to no more than 20 words
- Abstract Methods lengthened to no less than 80 words
- Abstract Results included additional statistical results
- Core Tip was included in the manuscript text
- References in Tables have been formatted
- Comments section included

- Figure 1 was included as a “decomposable” Microsoft Office Graphic Object

We trust that we have addressed all of your concerns. All changes to this paper have been highlighted in yellow for easy identification. Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larry Miller', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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