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ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 29100

Title: Burden of Illness of Irritable Bowel Syndrome in China: A prospective study

Reviewer's code: 00043396

Reviewer's country: Singapore

Science editor: Ze-Mao Gong

Date sent for review: 2016-08-02 19:57

Date reviewed: 2016-09-17 11:59

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	Google Search:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
		BPG Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is a socio-economic study of a group of IBS patients seen at one hospital in China. I think it is interesting and well researched and well written.



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ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 29100

Title: Burden of Illness of Irritable Bowel Syndrome in China: A prospective study

Reviewer's code: 01557050

Reviewer's country: Japan

Science editor: Ze-Mao Gong

Date sent for review: 2016-08-02 19:57

Date reviewed: 2016-09-28 18:44

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	Google Search:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor		[Y] No	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		BPG Search:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		[Y] No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

1) General comments Dr. Zhang, et al. reported Burden of illness of irritable bowel syndrome in China: A prospective study. The article is informative and well-presented. And this is the first report about the costs of IBS patients from China. The reviewer has no comments.



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ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 29100

Title: Burden of Illness of Irritable Bowel Syndrome in China: A prospective study

Reviewer's code: 03474130

Reviewer's country: Netherlands

Science editor: Ze-Mao Gong

Date sent for review: 2016-08-02 19:57

Date reviewed: 2016-09-28 19:31

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	Google Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
		BPG Search:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Manuscript: Burden of Illness of Irritable Bowel Syndrome in China: A prospective study. First I would like to congratulate the authors on this study and paper. It is a relevant topic with interesting results, the paper is well written. However I do have a few comments. 1) The authors describe a potential bias regarding external validity in the limitation section due to the inclusion of patients via the Third Hospital of Dalian Medical University. This is a very important point and to my opinion should be discussed in more detail. First of all, could the authors describe in the method section what kind of referral center this is, 2nd or 3rd? And furthermore, are any patients included via general practitioners. If not, this should be listed as a limitation. The authors extrapolate their results to the complete country by using the prevalence data from other studies. However, most IBS patients in all countries are not treated in second or third referral centers, but mostly stay at GP practices. Even more, many patients do not seek medical attentions at all. And therefore the costs of these patients are much lower compared to referred patients. Therefore, if the results of a second or third referral center are extrapolated to all IBS patients, it could be a relevant overestimation of the costs. Could the authors comment on this and include this both in the method section (i.e. describe the type



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of patients) and in the discussion. 2) The authors include 105 patients. They describe in the limitation section a potential bias regarding the relative small number of subjects. Furthermore, all subjects are from the same region. We know that significant differences in lifestyle, demographics and costs (use and access to medical facilities) are present in all countries. China is particularly large with large differences between regions. Could the authors describe why they think that these 105 patients are representative of all patients from all regions of China? Or is this a relevant limitation?

3) In the method section authors describe an exclusion criterion to be 'previous hypnotherapy'. Why should these patient be excluded? If therapy is some how a bias, why not exclude all patients who have had or still have some kind of medical or non-pharmaceutical therapy? To my opinion non of the therapies should be listed as an exclusion criterion, as we are interested in the full IBS population, regardless their status of therapy. Could the authors comment on this? If they agree, could they include the previously excluded patients based on hypnotherapy? If they do not agree, could provide valid arguments why hypnotherapy should be an exclusion criterion and include this explanation in the method section?

4) The authors describe a specially designed questionnaire which they have used for the study. As the questionnaire is the instrument by which all results have been collected it is very important that this instrument is described in great detail, for the study to be reproducible. Could the authors describe the questionnaire in more detail and provide the full list of questions as supplementary material to the article? Furthermore, could they describe if the questionnaire is validated in some way?

5) In the method section the authors describe at some point patients below the age of 16 years. Does this study include adults as well as pediatric patients, and if yes, why?

6) In the method section I read a somewhat remarkable sentence: "As IBS-related death was very rare,..." This sentence indicates that although rare, IBS related death occurs sometimes. IBS is per definition benign and not lethal, therefore the sentence should be formulated differently.

7) I agree to include a subtype analysis in the paper. However, the number of patients per subtypes are really small. This is in particular true for the IBS-M subtype (n=9). Extrapolating this data to China is risky. This is very clearly be noted in the pape