Author's response to reviews

Title: The effect of "living high-training low" on weight loss in overweight Chinese adolescents: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

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Version:3 Date:5 June 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
June 3, 2014

Doug Altman, Curt Furberg and Jeremy Grimshaw
Editors-in-Chief
Trials

Dear Drs. Altman, Furberg and Grimshaw,
Please find attached our response to the recent review of our manuscript. We would like to thank the handling editor for her helpful comments. We have incorporated her suggestions into a revised version of the manuscript. Revisions made have been highlighted in the manuscript (redlined version).

Sincerely,

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"I would encourage the authors to familiarize yourself with CONSORT guidelines and complement the description of the study protocol. Regarding these guidelines, some information in the abstract are not reported sufficiently well. Some of the information in the manuscript should be more visible (eg. primary / secondary outcome, inclusion/exclusion criteria), and other, like randomization procedure should be described in a more precise manner. The CONSORT checklist attached to the completed manuscript would be welcomed.

Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. We made revisions on relevant information according to the CONSORT guidelines. More details were added to the Methods part of the abstract, and consequently rewriting was done to the other parts of the abstract to meet the word limit (all highlighted).

Moreover, I have a few additional comments:

   a. The study groups will be small (n=20). I suppose that the authors plan to verify the assumptions for parametric methods of analysis?
   b. You wrote: "The multiple multivariate regression analysis will be performed (...)" Please, clarify - you mean "Multiple regression" or/and? "multivariate regression"?

Reply: Based on a power analysis and a 15% attrition rate, a minimum of 40 (20 for each group) subjects will be needed in our study. In the data analysis, a proper procedure will be followed as: parametric analyses will be considered first, for which parametric assumptions (such as normal distribution and equal variance) will be checked. If assumptions are not met, we will consider data transformation according to the distribution of the data. If no improvement can be achieved via data transformation, we will use corresponding non-parametric methods to run the analyses (relevant information was added on Page 15).

   b. You wrote: "The multiple multivariate regression analysis will be performed (...)"
   Please, clarify - you mean "Multiple regression" or/and?
   "multivariate regression"?

Reply: We have multiple outcome variables including both primary and secondary outcome measures. To analyze the associations between changes in these variables, we will develop multiple models by using different sets of dependent (response) and independent variables (regressors). The fit of the model will be tested for each case. Clarification was made in the revised version of the manuscript (page 16).

   "The basal metabolic rate will be calculated using the Miffilinequation [27] - needed space separating the two last words: Miffilin equation."

Reply: Thank you. Correction was made.

Editorial requests:
1. Please include all author email addresses on your title page.
Reply: Thank you. Email addresses for all authors are provided on the title page of the revised manuscript.