

RESPONSE TO LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Response by Dinu et al to Letters Regarding Article, “Low-Calorie Vegetarian Versus Mediterranean Diets for Reducing Body Weight and Improving Cardiovascular Risk Profile: CARDIVEG Study (Cardiovascular Prevention With Vegetarian Diet)”

In Response:

We read with interest the letters from Koh, Hnid, and Ye et al about our recent publication.¹ Koh emphasized the importance of both diet and exercise for weight loss. We completely agree with this comment, as the additive effect of the combination of diet and exercise in weight loss and weight maintenance has been clearly established. The purpose of our study was only to test the efficacy of 2 dietary profiles without exercise intervention; therefore, our study group was advised not to change their habitual lifestyle profile in terms of quantity and quality of physical activity.

Hnid wrote a comment on the role of pesticides in cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. Pesticides are generally used in conventional agriculture, and their harmful effects on health are widely known. We agree with the author that in the future we should consider including this test as part of a trial of clinical dietary intervention. However, at present their use within dietary trials is rare.

Finally, Ye et al in their letter raise a concern about our methodology. They claim that we should have used a repeated measurement of variance analysis instead of a 2-tailed Student *t* test to compare the results. Probably the authors missed the second part of the “Methods” section where we stated that a general linear model for repeated measures, adjusted for the order of treatment and weight change (for biochemical, oxidative and inflammatory parameters), was used to compare the effects of the 2 diets. This information is also given in the footnotes (Table 1, Table III in the online-only Data Supplement).

With regard to the gender and race interaction, we agree with the authors that gender, race, and lifestyle can interact with the results of any intervention study, but the design of our intervention study (ie, crossover) and the fact that the study population was completely white should have limited the possible biases arising from these aspects.

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Disclosures

None.

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1. Sofi F, Dinu M, Pagliai G, Cesari F, Gori AM, Sereni A, Becatti M, Fiorillo C, Marcucci R, Casini A. Low-calorie vegetarian versus Mediterranean diets for reducing body weight and improving cardiovascular risk profile: CARDIVEG Study (Cardiovascular Prevention With Vegetarian Diet). *Circulation*. 2018;137:1103–1113. doi: 10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.117.030088.

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