



The authors reply: Phosphorus as predictive factor for erectile dysfunction in middle aged men: A cross sectional study in Korea

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To the editor:

Our study was cross-sectional study as you say. As we mentioned in the limitations of this study, the cross-sectional design rules out the evaluation of causality and may have issues of temporality among the variables. We agree with your opinion. Our conclusions are somewhat exaggerated. Now, we re-announce to our readers that our research is about the potential relevancy of phosphorus and erectile dysfunction rather than prediction.

We know that internal validity is best estimated with bootstrapping and split-validation, which can provide stable estimates with low bias. At this point, however, we had too few variables. Especially, we did not have information about serum free or calculated testosterone, insulin-like growth factor-1, several cytokines, or C-reactive protein, which are considered to be important for erectile dysfunction. Thus, we agree that there is a real difficulty in proper model development. In addition, external validity must typically be studied in independent validation samples with patients from a different but “plausibly related” population [1]. However, we have yet to find a suitable comparable group.

We promise readers that if we find target groups later, we will continue to do further research including validation.

Regarding the normal distribution test, we did not explain the detailed statistical method concerning normality in the text. We think that it was inadequate. However, we did not perform the statistics assuming that the parameters were normal distributions. We used a nonparametric test and applied the Kruskal-Wallis test that you mentioned. We hope to clear up any misunderstanding about this point.

Thank you very much for your interest. We hope to see you again with a good follow-up paper in the future.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors have nothing to disclose.

REFERENCE

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Received: 18 January, 2017 • Accepted: 25 January, 2017

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