

August 18, 2008

To: Reviewers
Nursing Research

Re: Manuscript revision, NRES-D-07-00218
"Significant impairment in immune recovery following cancer treatment"

Dear Editor and Reviewers,

Thank you for the review comments to strengthen the quality of our manuscript. Below we have summarized our responses to the remaining issues, although both reviewers indicated them to be minor concerns.

We hope that this revision is acceptable for publication in Nursing Research. Thank you.

Reviewer 1:

1. The study design is still not clear...

The study design section is added under the Method for clarity.

2. Some references tend to be too old...

We updated the references as much as we could. However, as pointed out by the reviewer, some references remain as they provide most relevant information in the area of this study where research is limited.

3. Moving the section on the data collection procedures to after the section on the measurements...

Although we appreciate an alternative view on this matter, we believe that giving readers an overview about the data collection procedure first before explaining specific measurements might provide a better orientation to the method of the study.

Reviewer 3:

1. Use of the term "probability" vs. "percentages"...

We have made appropriate corrections for clarification.

2. Sample size determination is not convincing...

The section describing power has been substantially revised and clarified. Result of a post-hoc power analysis has been added.

3. Missing values...

In the statistical analysis section, we have clarified missing values to be 5 – 13 across all time points and all immune parameters, which is quite low, given the types of analyses, four repeated measures, and a 12-month study period in sick patients with breast cancer diagnosis and treatment.

4. Deleting the Greek letter Eta (SE) in Tables 5 – 7...

We agree with the reviewer's comments that those Eta values may not make clear sense to readers immediately and that the tables are too busy. Therefore, we deleted those values in Tables 5 – 7.