To the Editor

In a recent paper, Barzkar et al explored, in a large Iranian population (Tehran province), the prevalence, and risk factors of uninvestigated dyspepsia (UD). A total of 18,180 participants were included in this cross-sectional study. They completed a questionnaire consisting of a demographic and a clinical part. Among them, 1547 had functional dyspepsia based on Rome III criteria. The prevalence of UD was 8.5% higher in females, in age group >70 years, with low education. Half of the patients were overweight or obese. Correctly, according to the Rome III criteria, they separated reflux-like dyspepsia. We found these data very interesting and the study design strong. There is another aspect that merits highlighting. Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) infection, involved in gastric and extragastric diseases, may have a role in a subset of the cases of dyspepsia. Hence, to detect the infection by a non-invasive approach is the main initial strategy in patients with dyspepsia without “alarm” symptoms. In areas with low H. pylori prevalence (<20%), proton pump inhibitor empirical treatment or a test and treat strategy were considered to be equivalent options. Therefore, knowing the prevalence of this infection is a clue to define a health policy in each area. It would be interesting to know if the authors have data on the prevalence of H. pylori infection in the examined population, and if studies have been conducted on this specific topic.

Reply from the Author

We thank Dr Pellicano and Dr Fagoonee for their valuable comments. They are concerned with knowing the prevalence of H. pylori infection in the examined population. We did not study the infection of H. pylori in this cross-sectional study due to some limitations, but in the same community based study conducted by our research center in the west of Iran, the seroprevalence of H. pylori was observed to be high, 71% (95% CI: 69%-73%). This corresponds very closely to figures from other developing countries.

Mohamad A. Pourhoseingholi
Bijan Moghimi-Dehkordi
Research Center for Gastroenterology and Liver Diseases
Shahid Beheshti University, MC
Tehran, Iran

References