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**Letter re: ASCEND Study: N Engl J Med 2018 Aug 26
doi:10.1056/NEJMoa1804989**

Journal:	<i>New England Journal of Medicine</i>
Manuscript ID	Draft
Article Type:	Letter about NEJM Article
Date Submitted by the Author:	n/a
Complete List of Authors:	Vasquez, Alex; ICHNFM
Abstract:	

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Manuscripts

ASCEND showed no advantage of 1,000 mg/d marine n3 fatty acids against equally-dosed naturally occurring olive oil. Olive oil apparently reduces cardiovascular and total mortality¹, while oleic acid shows direct vascular antiinflammatory, atheroprotective, and antidiabetic benefits.² A six-week trial among overweight subjects reported that olive oil 2 g/d was more effective than equidosed fish oil for reducing fasting glucose, HgA1c, hsCRP, and IL6.³ A six-month trial among rheumatic patients showed that 6 g/d of olive oil provided analgesic and antiinflammatory benefits, leading the authors to conclude, "Olive oil can no longer confidently be used as a placebo control."⁴ Using olive oil as a comparator against other antiinflammatory treatments diminishes the therapeutic differential and apparent benefit for both substances; this results in a type-2 error and underappreciation of therapeutics' effectiveness. 10% of ASCEND subjects were taking n3 supplementation at baseline, with corresponding omega-3 indexes of 6.6% and 7.1%, remarkably higher than the average 4% typical of Western societies.⁵ Pre-treatment plus high baseline status would reduce the clinical response to intervention with n3 and olive oil supplementation.

[1] Hu FB. The Mediterranean diet and mortality—olive oil and beyond. *N Engl J Med*. 2003 Jun 26;348(26):2595-6

[2] Palomer X, Pizarro-Delgado J, Barroso E, Vázquez-Carrera M. Palmitic and Oleic Acid: The Yin and Yang of Fatty Acids in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. *Trends Endocrinol Metab*. 2018 Mar;29(3):178-190. doi: 10.1016/j.tem.2017.11.009

[3] Gammelmarm A, Madsen T, Varming K, et al. Low-dose fish oil supplementation increases serum adiponectin without affecting inflammatory markers in overweight subjects. *Nutr Res*. 2012 Jan;32(1):15-23. doi: 10.1016/j.nutres.2011.12.007

[4] Brzeski M, Madhok R, Capell HA. Evening primrose oil in patients with rheumatoid arthritis and side-effects of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. *Br J Rheumatol*. 1991 Oct;30(5):370-2

[5] Stark KD, Van Elsland ME, Higgins MR, Weatherford CA, Salem N Jr. Global survey of the omega-3 fatty acids, docosahexaenoic acid and eicosapentaenoic acid in the blood stream of healthy adults. *Prog Lipid Res*. 2016 Jul;63:132-52. doi: 10.1016/j.plipres.2016.05.001

On Mon, Dec 3, 2018 at 10:48 PM NEJM Letter wrote:

Dear Dr. Vasquez,

I am sorry that we will not be able to publish your recent letter to the editor regarding the Armitage article of 18-Oct-2018. The space available for correspondence is very limited, and we must use our judgment to present a representative selection of the material received. Many worthwhile communications must be declined for lack of space. Thank you for your interest in the Journal.

Sincerely,

-- G. -- M.D.

Deputy Editor

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From: Dr Alex (Kennerly) Vasquez ICHNFM

Date: Wed, Dec 12, 2018 at 1:37 PM

Subject: Re: New England Journal of Medicine 18-12067

To: nejm

Not surprising, considering that Medical Journals Are an Extension of the Marketing Arm of Pharmaceutical Companies, per *PLoS Med* 2(5): e138.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.0020138>

Problems with your published article include the following:

1. Under-dosed fish oil: described below

2. Inappropriate placebo: The ASCEND study used an inappropriate placebo against underdosed fish oil, ultimately to pave the way for greater acceptance of the late-year launch of "purified prescription fish oil"...how convenient: AHA: Prescription Fish Oil Wins for CV Prevention, November 10, 2018

<https://www.medpagetoday.com/meetingcoverage/aha/76252>

3. Bad research in support of a new pharmaceutical drug launch: per above

4. Supervision of the trial authors by the drug company paying the authors: what a joke of an article

5. Complete failure to disclose conflicts of interest among the authors in the published paper.

6. Plenty of space: NEJM clearly has 250 words of space to publish these concerns, so only an imbecile would think that the journal "does not have space" to publish my critique. The original article had approximately 6,970 words (per computerized count) so that 250 words in a letter such as mine is less than 4% of the original article.

To see an accurate review of your garbage research, please see my video review: <https://vimeo.com/287650812>

Sincerely,

Dr Alex (Kennerly) Vasquez

Confidential: Destroy when review is complete.