

## **Author's response to reviews**

**Title:** Participant experiences in a breastmilk biomonitoring study: A qualitative assessment

### **Authors:**

Nerissa Wu ([nerissa.wu@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:nerissa.wu@cdph.ca.gov))  
Michael D. McClean ([mmcclean@bu.edu](mailto:mmcclean@bu.edu))  
Phil Brown ([Phil\\_Brown@brown.edu](mailto:Phil_Brown@brown.edu))  
Ann Aschengrau ([aaschen@bu.edu](mailto:aaschen@bu.edu))  
Thomas F. Webster ([twebster@bu.edu](mailto:twebster@bu.edu))

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over

Philippe Grandjean  
Environmental Health  
BioMed Central Ltd  
Middlesex House  
34-42 Cleveland Street  
London W1T 4LB, UK

January 29, 2009

Dear Dr. Grandjean;

Enclosed please find our revised manuscript. We have made the following changes to the text in response to your comments.

***Spell out more clearly what the risks associated with biomonitoring studies are.*** The background section includes a description of potential harm, and we have added a line of text (page 4) regarding the concern that women would be discouraged from breastfeeding because of breastmilk biomonitoring.

***Is it important whether report-back is offered? On page 6 you may want to discuss the significance of the time of reporting.*** The section “Communication of Biomonitoring Results” offers discussion of why it is important to offer report back. We did not find any discussion in the literature which addressed the timing of report-back for biomonitoring studies, but we identified timing as an issue which should be explored further. The section “Impacts of Individual Results on Breastfeeding” in the Discussion (page 20) addresses this issue.

***Conclusions should spell out clearly what we have learned in the study and what are recommendations. Conclusion should be one single paragraph.*** The conclusion has been rewritten to address the comment.

***Is the issue of PBB toxicity a concern with regard to breastfeeding duration?*** A sentence has been added on page 5 to clarify that the study considered both the attitude towards breastfeeding and the potential toxicological affect of PBB on breastmilk production.

***Page 23 includes some information on the participants from Lowell - preferably all results should be presented in the results section.*** The discussion of participant characteristics has been moved to the results section on page 11.

***Remove pagination.*** Pagination has been removed.

***Format references correctly.*** Reference numbers have been changed to the format shown in the Environmental Health template.

**List of abbreviations should begin on a new page.** A page break has been inserted before the List of Abbreviations.

**Shorten the manuscript.** We have edited the text and have slightly reduced the length. We feel that more significant reduction in text will compromise the clarity of the writing.

Thank you for our comments and your continued assistance. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Nerissa Wu  
Boston University School of Public Health