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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**Reply to letter to the Editor: rs4072037
Polymorphisms and their role in
gastrointestinal carcinogenesis**


We appreciate Dr. Kapoor's interest in our recent article published in *Respiratory Medicine*.¹ In this article, we reported that different distribution of the rs4072037 genotypes in *MUC1* was associated with the difference in serum KL-6 levels between German and Japanese cohorts. Because the rs4072037 polymorphism is in strong linkage disequilibrium with variable numbers of tandem repeats (TRs) in *MUC1*² and KL-6 antigens are believed to reside in TRs of *MUC1*,^{3,4} we concluded that serum KL-6 levels were affected by the rs4072037 genotypes in *MUC1*. As introduced in the letter from Dr. Kapoor, there are a couple of studies that demonstrate the linkage between the rs4072037 genotypes in *MUC1* and gastrointestinal cancer incidences. Although precise mechanisms underlying these observations are not determined, we speculate that variable numbers of TRs (VNTR) in *MUC1* might also influence the development of gastrointestinal cancers. Therefore, in addition to role of the rs4072037 polymorphism in gastrointestinal malignancies, further studies investigating the linkage between VNTR in *MUC1* and cancer incidence would be of particular interest to us.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest associated with this letter.

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