*Authors' Reply***Reply to Comment on: Weets I, Kaufman L, Van der Auwera B et al. (2004) Seasonality in clinical onset of Type 1 diabetes in Belgian patients above the age of 10 is restricted to HLA DQ2/DQ8-negative males, which explains the male to female excess in incidence. Diabetologia 47:614–621**

To the Editor: We thank you for your interest in our work [1] and the suggestions made.

Although we listed vitamin D status as one of many season-dependent external factors that possibly contribute to seasonality at diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes, our recent study [1] did not specifically aim at further elucidating the putative implication of vitamin D deficiency in the aetiology of Type 1 diabetes. We previously found no differences in season at birth between our group of Type 1 diabetic patients and the Belgian background population [2]. Also, there was no significant seasonality at diagnosis under age 10 [1]. Therefore our studies

provide no indirect evidence that putative season-dependent risk factors such as maternal, perinatal or childhood vitamin D deficiency play a central role in the initiation or precipitation of childhood-onset Type 1 diabetes.

However, these observations do not rule out vitamin D deficiency as one of the disease initiators or accelerators and further studies on the possible implication of vitamin D status and receptor polymorphisms in the pathogenesis of Type 1 diabetes are certainly warranted. In this respect, prospective studies in risk groups such as first-degree relatives, preferably followed from birth on, are likely to be most informative.

F. K. Gorus, I. Weets
Diabetes Research Center, Brussels Free University (VUB),
Brussels, Belgium

References

1. Weets I, Kaufman L, Van der Auwera B et al. (2004) Seasonality in clinical onset of Type 1 diabetes in Belgian patients above the age of 10 is restricted to *HLA Q2/DQ8*-negative males, which explains the male to female excess in incidence. *Diabetologia* 47:614–621
2. Weets I (2004) Etiological and phenotypical heterogeneity of diabetes presenting before age 40 according to demographic and biological parameters: variable contributions of genetic and external acceleration. PhD Thesis, Brussels Free University, Brussels, p 181

F. K. Gorus (✉)
Diabetes Research Center, Brussels Free University (VUB),
Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussels, Belgium
E-mail: frans.gorus@az.vub.ac.be
Tel.: +32-2-4775030, Fax: +32-2-4775047

DOI 10.1007/s00125-004-1540-2

Received: 3 June 2004 / Accepted: 28 July 2004

Published online: 22 October 2004

© Springer-Verlag 2004