Dr. Wolfe replies

To the Editor:

I thank the authors for the interesting comments¹. They said: “The authors consider CWP [chronic widespread pain] as a surrogate for FM [fibromyalgia], allowing an unbiased diagnosis. Why use a surrogate instead of the real thing? A diagnosis that is based solely on the patient’s description and interview, without physical examination and at least some objective or semiobjective signs, is often extremely biased. Quantity is not a substitute for quality.”

Researchers studied CWP because it was extraordinarily expensive and operationally impossible to perform tender point examinations in epidemiological and large-group studies. Asking people where they have pain during population surveys is not usually considered to be biased.

With respect to the studies by Tishler, *et al*² the authors state that I “forgot to mention that the majority of the patients were male, in contrast to the expected sex distribution in FM.” I did not exactly “forget” to mention this. Males are involved in more traffic accidents generally, and in Israel the majority of auto accidents occur among males. Tishler, *et al* clearly mentions the 93:60 male-to-female ratio in their paper².

The authors write, “He also disclosed that he has testified in US courts but he ignored a minor piece of information: whether he represented the claimant or the insurer in his court testimony.” To my memory, I have testified in court twice in the last 10 years, both times at the request of the insurer. My testimony was about the nature of FM. I do not testify about specific details of a case. I have not accepted cases where I am asked to testify whether trauma did or did not cause a claimant’s alleged FM.

FREDERICK WOLFE, MD, National Data Bank for Rheumatic Diseases, Wichita, Kansas, USA. Address correspondence to Dr. F. Wolfe, National Data Bank for Rheumatic Diseases, 1035 N. Emporia, Ste. 230, Wichita, Kansas 67214, USA. E-mail: fwolfe@arthritis-research.org

REFERENCES

1. Mader R, Buskila D, Ehrenfeld M. Comment on “Fibromyalgia and physical trauma: the concepts we invent”. *J Rheumatol* 2015;42:351-2.
2. Tishler M, Levy O, Maslakov I, Bar-Chaim S, Amit-Vazina M. Neck injury and fibromyalgia — are they really associated? *J Rheumatol* 2006;33:1183-5.

J Rheumatol 2015;42:2; doi:10.3899/jrheum.141343