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Address for correspondence and reprints: Dr. Ann B. Begovich, Celera Diagnostics, 1401 Harbor Bay Parkway, Alameda, CA 94502. E-mail: Ann.Begovich@celeradiagnostics.com

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Corrections to the Parameterization of Constraints on Allele Sharing in Sibling Pairs Alter Covariate-Parameter Estimates but Not Sharing-Probability Estimates or Power of Tests for Linkage

To the Editor:

Errors in appendix B of our 1999 article in the *Journal* (Greenwood and Bull 1999) were recently pointed out to us (D. Weeks and H.-J. Tsai, personal communication). The simultaneous-boundary-constrained estimates for $z_0(x_i)$ presented in 1999 do not give the correct values for the covariate parameters under the null hypothesis. The correct expression for the expected proportion of sibling pairs sharing zero alleles identical by

Table 1

Original and Corrected Results of Simulation Models

MODEL, CONSTRAINT METHOD, AND COVARIATE(S)	df	RESULTS REPORTED IN 1999		CORRECTED RESULTS	
		Mean LOD Score	5% Empirical Power	Mean LOD Score	5% Empirical Power
Single-gene model (model 1; original table 2) ^a :					
Unconstrained model:					
No covariates	2	2.20	.70	2.19	.67
Constrained model:					
No covariates, no dominance variance	1	1.97	.74	1.96	.73
No covariates, no additive variance	1	1.26	.53	1.25	.53
No covariates, minmax-optimal constraint	1	1.78	.71	1.77	.71
Mean age at onset, no dominance variance, simultaneous-boundary constraint	2	3.08	.87	3.08	.85
Mean age at onset, no additive variance, simultaneous-boundary constraint	2	1.88	.58	1.88	.54
Mean age at onset, minmax-optimal simultaneous-boundary constraint	2	2.61	.82	2.80	.77
Gene-environment–interaction model (model 2b; original table 3) ^b :					
Unconstrained model:					
No covariates	2	1.47	.42	1.50	.44
Constrained model:					
No covariates, minmax-optimal constraint	1	1.23	.54	1.24	.51
Two covariates, minmax-optimal simultaneous-boundary constraint	2	1.72	.44	1.78	.41

^a For the single-gene model, 34/500 linked data sets were excluded from the results in the 1999 article (Greenwood and Bull 1999) because of lack of convergence. After correction, no data sets were excluded.

^b For the gene-environment–interaction model, 82/500 data sets were excluded from the results in the 1999 article (Greenwood and Bull 1999) because of lack of convergence. After correction, 13/500 data sets were excluded.

descent (IBD) under the simultaneous-boundary constraint with no additive variance should be

$$z_0(x_i) = \frac{\exp(\beta'_0 x_i)}{1 + 3 \exp(\beta'_0 x_i)}.$$

The relationships between this proportion and those for sharing one or two alleles IBD do not change from the 1999 article: $z_1(x_i) = 2z_0(x_i)$ and $z_2(x_i) = 1 - 3z_0(x_i)$.

For the minmax-optimal simultaneous-boundary constraint, the correct expression should be

$$z_0(x_i) = \frac{0.645 \exp(\beta'_0 x_i)}{1 + 1.58 \exp(\beta'_0 x_i)}.$$

As in the 1999 article, the constraints on the other sharing proportions are $z_1(x_i) = 0.355 + 0.58z_0(x_i)$ and $z_2(x_i) = 0.645 - 1.58z_0(x_i)$. Note that both the original (see appendix B in Greenwood and Bull 1999) and the corrected expressions for $z_0(x_i)$ satisfy the specified constraints on the expected sharing proportion $z_j(x_i)$ and differ only in those values of the covariate-associated parameter vector β_0 that correspond to specific null or alternative hypotheses.

When written in terms of the sharing proportion $z_0(x_i)$, the score equations—based on the $\text{LOD}^{**}(\beta_0)$ expressions given in appendix B (Greenwood and Bull 1999) and used in the M step of the estimation algorithm—are identical for the original and corrected expressions. Provided that the z_{ij} s in the E step are updated using the $z_0(x_i)$ estimates, the final $z_0(x_i)$ estimates from the expectation-maximization algorithm, and hence the LOD scores for the test of linkage with covariates, will also be identical.

This can be considered as a special case of the invar-

iance of the likelihood to reparameterization. Therefore, the original conclusions concerning relative power and effects of constraints are unchanged.

We have rerun our simulations to confirm these theoretical conclusions, and we show here in table 1 some corrected results and original results from tables 2 and 3 of the 1999 article (Greenwood and Bull 1999). The corrected algorithms almost always converge, whereas we previously had more difficulty in obtaining convergence with these two constraint methods. Thus, we conclude that the small differences in mean LOD scores or in significance levels are a result of the fact that we no longer had to exclude as many data sets from our summaries. Therefore, although estimates of the parameter β_0 would not be correct if the expressions in the 1999 article were used, our conclusions about the power of the various approaches have not changed.

CELIA M. T. GREENWOOD^{1,2} AND SHELLEY B. BULL^{2,3}
¹*Program in Genetics and Genomic Biology, Hospital for Sick Children,* ²*Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Toronto, and* ³*Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto*

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Address for correspondence and reprints: Dr. Celia M. T. Greenwood, Genetics and Genomic Biology, Elm 11-101, Hospital for Sick Children, 555 University Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1X8, Canada. E-mail: celia.greenwood@utoronto.ca

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