ng/ml creatinine, depending on whether log to the base 10 or natural log is used, respectively. This number seems to be very low compared with that given in many studies which are usually in the range of >1000 ng/ml creatinine. It will be helpful if Ong et al could provide explanation for this apparent discrepancy.

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Author's reply—The overall objective of our article was to evaluate the usefulness of five common biomarkers of exposure to benzene at low levels (0.2-0.5 ppm) exposure to benzene and as stipulated in the conclusion all the biomarkers were unable to provide sufficient specificity for biomonitoring at the low concentration range. All data and figures reported that they are not to be used for estimation of exposure to low level environmental exposure to benzene, particularly <0.25 ppm. Our earlier data showed that trans,trans-muconic acid could be useful for environmental exposure to benzene >0.5 ppm; with a calculated exposure to 1 ppm benzene, about 0.9-1.7 mg/g creatinine would be expected at the end of eight hours of exposure.

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Offspring sex ratios and reproductive hazards

8 James WH. Evidence that mammalian sex ratios at birth are partially controlled by parental hormone levels and the stage of conception. J Theor Biol 1996;180:271-86.

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