

## Authors' Response

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## AUTHORS' RESPONSE

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We would like to thank Professor Cowin for his interest in and comments related to our paper.

We fully agree with Cowin in his additional comments to the conclusions of the study, (1) that negligence of higher-order fabric measures seem justified, and (2) that the anisotropy of the trabecular tissue has only marginal effects—if any—on the macroscopic elastic behaviour of cancellous bone. These are indeed important conclusions. We note, by the way, that the proof for the second point, the validity of the effective isotropic tissue modulus, was strengthened further in recent work from Kabel *et al.* (1996), comparing experimental results for 29 whole specimens to those of micro-mechanical FEA models.

One caveat in the present study may, however, be the high degree of homogeneity and order in the material studied. The conclusions may not be directly extendible to human cancellous bone because of its generally less ordered structure, and we feel that further verification is needed.

The conclusions reached relates to the elastic properties of cancellous bone. No conclusion concerning anisotropy of strength can be reached. The only link is a number of empirical observations that strength and elastic modulus are related. Although no evidence exists, we feel that tissue anisotropy and non-fabric architectural measures may have some influence on strength anisotropy. This is, however, a highly under-represented field in research on cancellous bone mechanics.

### REFERENCE

- Kabel, J., van Rietbergen, B., Dalstra, M., Odgaard, A. and Huiskes, R. (1996) A comparison of large scale finite element modeling and traditional compressive testing experiments. *Transactions of the 10th ESB*, Leuven Belgium, p. 271. (Submitted to *Journal of Biomechanics*)