Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluation of the Birmingham IBS Symptom Questionnaire.

Version: 1 Date: 9 April 2008

Reviewer: Yasuhiro Sagami

Reviewer’s report:

1. Major compulsory revision
In this manuscript, 15% of all samples were unable to work for health reasons. Is this sample appropriate for the diagnosis of only IBS? Could not they work for only exacerbation of IBS? I just guess that they had not only IBS but also other severe diseases occurring severe abdominal symptoms.
Authors have to present more details of the group unable to work in the manuscript. If not presented, authors must describe the limitation (about samples) of the research in discussion of the manuscript.

2. Minor essential revision
In Rome # criteria, IBS patients have chronic and frequent abdominal pain / discomfort that has a relief by defecation and an onset associated change in frequency or form of stool. Therefore, the relation between abdominal pain and status of defecation is the key of clinical evaluation in IBS. However, there is no analysis about the relation between abdominal pain and defecation.
Authors should describe why there were no question and factor analysis about the relation between abdominal pain and defecation.

3. Discretionary revision
Different numbers were presented in abstract (534 persons) and manuscript (533 persons) at the total mailed persons in this research.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.