Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparison of Performance-Based Measures among native Japanese, Japanese-Americans in Hawaii and Caucasian Women in the United States, ages 65 years and over: a cross-sectional study

Authors:
Kiyoshi Aoyagi (kiyoshi@net.nagasaki-u.ac.jp)
Philip D Ross (philip_ross@merck.com)
Michael C Nevitt (MNevitt@psg.ucsf.edu)
James W Davis (James_Davis@hmsa.com)
Richard D Wasnich (richardwasnich@radiantresearch.com)
Takuo Hayashi (t.hayashi@mitsugibyouin.com)
Tai-ichiro Takimoto (takimoto@net.nagasaki-u.ac.jp)

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Dear Dr. Carole Mongin-Bulewski:

Thank you for forwarding review comments on our manuscript entitled 'Comparison of performance-based measures among native Japanese, Japanese-Americans in Hawaii and Caucasian women in the United States, ages 65 years and over: a cross-sectional study'. Responses to the comments together with a revised version of the paper with highlighted changes (underlined) are attached for your consideration.

We appreciate your timely response on the first version, and hope you will find the revised version suitable for publication.

Sincerely,

Kiyoshi Aoyagi, M.D.

Responses to comments by Dr. Raja Rajatanavin

1. Dietary calcium, physical activity, previous fractures and family history of fractures were added to the Discussion (p14-15), as suggested. The Discussion now notes that additional studies are needed that consider the influences of such variables (p15).
2. A paragraph regarding geometry of the femur with references was added to the Discussion (p14), as suggested.
3. The age groups used for comparisons were changed as suggested. 80-84 years and over 85 years was combined, and results were revised accordingly (Table 2, Result: p10).

4. The sentence 'Further study is needed to control potential confounders to determine if neuromuscular risk factors for falls are independent risk factors for hip fracture.' was added to the Discussion (p15), as suggested. Furthermore, the Abstract and Background sections now note that the purpose of the study is to generate hypotheses for testing in future studies, as suggested by Dr. Rajatanavin.

Responses to comments by Dr. Seiji Yasumura

1. The combination of age groups was changed, as suggested; 80-84 years and > 85 years were combined, and the results section was revised accordingly (Table 2, Results: p10).

2. The sentence 'grip strength may be .....' was deleted from the Discussion (p12), because we did not have physical labor information. The lack of information on physical labor is now discussed in this paragraph.

3. It is likely that neuromuscular function is influenced by physical activity and occupation, as noted by the reviewer. Therefore, the sentence 'Thus, the differences of performance-based measures among populations may be in part influenced by differences in physical activity, including occupation.' was added to the Discussion (p14).