Reviewer's report

Title: Traditional Cantonese Diet and Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma Risk: a Large-scale Case-control Study in Guangdong, China

Version: 2 Date: 7 July 2010

Reviewer: Ahmed Abdulamir

Reviewer's report:

The authors of this study have answered satisfactorily to almost all concerns raised by the reviewers. Moreover, they have modified the manuscript to fit with the required changes. Hence, the current status of the manuscript reflects much better version than the earlier one especially on clarifying how authors excluded potential cases of NPC from control group. However, the control group is still not correctly managed but as they stated that the impact of this will not bias the results of the study much.

The authors did not give strong justifications on why they did not mention in the questionare the following question "how many times of consumption of herbal tea and soup are per day?". They answered this is difficult to recall; however, I think it is not difficult to recall how many times a person conducts a daily habit for years. This is one of the most serious flaws of this study as the questionare missed the daily frequency of taking the herbal tea or soup; taking twice or thrice a day is totaly different from taking once a day especially for consumptions of long periods of times. This drawback might mimick a study making survey on the daily habit of cigarette smoking without asking on the number of cigarettes smoked per day.

Another point, authors stated that there are few studies regarding NPC conducted on the region of interest or on south china counties. I have searched medline, scopus, google, and science direct, I found many references discussing NPC epidemiology in south china including Guandong county. Anyhow, the references offered by authors in the new version might be enough.

My final opinion is that the manuscript now is ok except for the erroneous management of the data collection regarding the frequency/approximate amount of consumption per day which, in my personal attitude, might give not-precise results.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

declare that I have no competing interests