Author's response to reviews

Title: A comparative study between mixed-type tumours from human salivary and canine mammary glands

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Author's response to reviews: see over
A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN MIXED-TYPE TUMOURS FROM HUMAN SALIVARY AND CANINE MAMMARY GLANDS

Marisa CLS Genelhu, Sergio V Cardoso, Helenice Gobbi and Geovanni D Cassali

Dear Abigail Brown
Editorial Administrator BMC-series journals
BioMed Central

I am just sending the revised article and, one more time, thank you very much for your attention and consideration.

I worked thoroughly to answer the recommendations of Dr. David Sargan. I would like to thank him for revising this article and inform that all changes have been carefully made to follow your’s considerations. I believe that all these requested changes and the contribution from all referees have improved the quality of manuscript. I hope that the revised version is now compatible with the high quality of BioMed Central publications, and being appropriated to be published considering the resubmitted version.

Best regards,
Marisa Genelhu

ANSWERS AND COMMENTARIES TO REVIEWER’S REPORT
Reviewer: David Sargan

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. **Reviewer:** “This would be best tacked by comparing the real ages of human PA and Ca ex-PA separately and then doing the same for the dogs, whilst noting that in both species these represented groups of middle aged to mature adults in both species.”

**Answer:** Attending to the referee’s suggestion, the ages of the animals were not converted according to the Lebeau’s table and the related reference was removed. The real animal ages are plotted in the tables 3 and 4. It is important to emphasize that the central idea of the comparison stayed: in both species it was observed that the benign tumours happen in the younger individuals' group, while the malignant tumours are more frequent in older individuals' group.
2. **Reviewer:** “This study adds nothing to what was already known.”

**Answer:** In spite of well established role of receptor estrogen in the development of the human and canine mammary tumours, the same cannot be said regarding the human salivary glands. There are many controversies in the literature and adaptations were accomplished in the manuscript to justify and to motivate futures studies in this field.

**Reviewer:** “It is not correct to suggest that salivary tumours are not ‘responsive to the hormonal environment’ when the results apply only to the ability to respond directly to estrogens, and no other hormones have been measured.”

**Answer:** We agree with the reviewer. Proper alteration was made and we change the expression “hormonal environment”.

3. **Reviewer:** “In the absence of further data, the sections of the introduction and methods, the few words in the discussion and table 5 and Figure 1 dealing with gland size should all be removed.”

**Answer:** We agree with the reviewer. The following sections were removed:
- **Background,** page 4, lines 3-5 (Another similar feature between human salivary gland and canine mammary glands is the frequency of malignant tumours, which is inversely proportional to the size of the affected gland [26,27].). The references were removed too.
- **Methods,** page 5, lines 6-14 (In order to convert the dogs’ age, the first two years of the dogs’ lives corresponded to 24 years of the human species, and then after the second year, each year corresponded to four years in the human species [29]. A specific method to classify five pairs of canine mammary glands according to sets of human salivary glands was developed in the present study, evaluating the size of each pair, using dissected glands (n = 10 for each one of the three categories of size of the salivary glands and n = 15 for each one of the three categories of size of the canine mammary glands) and measuring in three dimensions the glandular parenchyma (Table 5). The table 5 was removed too.
- **Discussion,** page 9, lines 15 and 16. The expressions epidemiological and location and size of affected gland were removed.
- The Figure 1 was removed and the numbering of the other figures illustrations was modified.

**Minor Essential Revisions**

4. We believed that there was a problem with the download of figure 4, now figure 3 and we provided an extra copy for the reviewer.

5. **Language – English written:** The manuscript was completely reviewed. Many corrections were performed in order to improve legibility and style. E.g.:
In the Abstract, line 8, the term \textit{sample} was changed by \textit{examples}, attending to the referee’s suggestion.

In the Background, paragraph 2, line 10, the word \textit{tumours} was increased.

In the Methods, the sentence that characterizes the cases selection of Ca ex-PA was reformulated.