Reviewer's report

**Title:** Wearing Face Masks in Public During the Influenza Season May Reflect Other Positive Hygiene Practices in Japan

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 28 October 2012

**Reviewer:** sian Griffiths

**Reviewer's report:**

This study is clearly described. The limitations are recognised by the authors but they should describe any attempts they made to validate the responses as this was an online survey. How were the web survey company select the 3000 recruits - and did they do anything to eliminate bias- or even offer incentives? Also the authors need to explain how they ended up with 3129 participants - were there some people who chose not to participate ? and what response rate did they have

From this data can they say anything about non responders? - and it would also be useful to know whether the respondents were 'typical' of the Japanese population or a specific subset. The proportions in different age groups are similar - but is this reflective of the population structure. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the study is the clustering of health protective behaviours including mask wearing

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

i declare that i have no competing interests