Author’s response to reviews

Title: Association between tooth loss and orodigestive cancer mortality in an 80-year-old community-dwelling Japanese population: a 12-year prospective study

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Prof. Petti,

Thank you very much for your reply as well as sending the comments from the Editor and two Reviewers concerning our manuscript (MS: 1746842708989093), entitled “Association between tooth loss and orodigestive cancer mortality in an 80-year-old community-dwelling Japanese population: a 12-year prospective study”. After reviewing those carefully, we made several changes to the text. As a result, we believe that the revised version has been greatly improved and is now acceptable for publication in *BMC Public Health*.

Changes in the revised manuscript are typed in red, while our responses to the reviewers are shown following. We sincerely thank the reviewers for their valuable insights and you for your interest in our work.

We would be grateful if the manuscript could be reviewed and considered again for publication in your journal.

Yours sincerely,

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Following are our replies to the comments of the Editor and two Reviewers:
Editor:
1. The authors softened their initial strong conclusion of a causal association between tooth loss and orodigestive cancer, but some sentences in the Discussion section still keep explaining the reasons for the causal association. Then, the two paragraphs in the Discussion section and the conclusive sentence must be deleted.

• We really agreed with the comment, and then those sentences in the Discussion and Conclusions section including the relevant references have been deleted (Pages 15, 16, 17 and 22 in the previous manuscript).

Reviewer I
Major revisions:
1. In the statistical analysis, it should be clearly stated which criteria was used to conform the samples of n1 and n2.

• The criteria were added in the text of the Methods section (Page 8, lines 2 to 3).

2. On results, which was the criterion to categorize groups according to missing teeth?

• Additional explanation has been added in the Methods section (Page 8, lines 8 to 11).

Reviewer II
Major revisions
1. The authors included information regarding community area in the table, but no description about it in the Methods section. The authors should describe what is the meaning of community area they used and how appropriate it is as representative for socio-economic status is not discussed.

• Some descriptions have been added in the Methods section (Page 5, lines 11 to 16, and Page 6, lines 1 to 2).

2. The authors added Kaplan-Meier analysis, but no description in the Methods section about the Kaplan-Meier analysis and why they used it.

• Some description has been added in the Methods section (Page 8, lines 4 to 2 from the bottom).