Author's response to reviews

Title: Incidence and Risk Factors of infection in oral cancer patients undergoing different treatments protocols

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Reply to Reviewer's Comments:
Reviewer: Velia Ramirez Amador

Introduction
Q. 1. It is necessary to include data related with the increased risk for Candida colonization and infection in radiation therapy, influenced by salivary hypofunction resulting from radiation therapy.
Ans. The data related to Candida colonization influenced by salivary hypofunction resulting from radiation therapy has been added with four new references (18 to 21) in the introduction.

Q 2. It is also necessary to clarify if the manuscript refers to colonization or infection that is not a clinical study. Studies reporting clinical oral fungal infection use clinical examination, studies reporting fungal colonization use fungal cultures (Support Care Cancer. 2010; 18(8):985-92).
Ans. This fact has been clarified in the introduction of MS that we have worked on colonization of fungal species only and it is not a clinical study.

Methods
Q 3. Inclusion criteria are not specified. It is not mentioned if the numbers of colonies were counted, particularly Candida sp, and expressed as CFU/ml. It is suggested to include in this section the definition of terms described in Table 1, as criteria followed in the study. Remove Table 1.
Ans. The number of colonies of bacteria and fungi has been added as CFU/ml and Table 1 has been removed from results. The inclusion criteria has been specified in methodology.

Results
Q 4. In Table 1, in the Anemia definition it is stated” A pathologic deficiency in the amount of oxygen-carrying hemoglobin in the red blood cells. In case of males Hb. >14g/dl and in case of females Hb. > 12 g/dl were considered as anemic cases”. It seems it should say: In case of males Hb. < 14g/dl and in case of females Hb. < 12 g/dl were considered as anemic cases.
Ans. The definition of Anemia has been changed as suggested by reviewer.

Q 5. In Table 2, it is suggested to add the percentages, not only the absolute numbers.
Ans. After deleting Table 1, Table 2 designated as **Table 1**. The % has been added in the table.

Q 6. Table 3 is not clear. It is suggested to describe in the text the top part of the Table (the one that refers to the number of febrile episodes and no. of pathogens), and remove this information from the Table. Also, it needs to describe if the values in the table refers to mean or median values. In the foot NOTE, % age should say only %.

Ans. The top part of the previously table 3 now **table 2** has been removed and the description has been given in the text. %age is displaced by %. The values mentioned in the table represent the total numbers of patients. It has also been mentioned in the table footnote.

Q 7. It is suggested to join Tables 4, 5 and 6 in one, mentioning only the most relevant results.

Ans. All the three tables have been merged in one table and designated as **table 3**.

Q 8. Table 7 is not clear. It is suggested to describe in the text the top part of the Table (the one that refers to the number of febrile episodes and no. of pathogens), and remove this information from the Table. Also, it needs to describe if the values in the table refers to mean or median values in the foot. NOTE, % age should say only %.

Ans. The top part of the previously table 7 now **table 4** has been removed and the description has been given in the text. %age is displaced by %. The values mentioned in the table represent the total numbers of patients. It has also been mentioned in the table footnote.

Q 9. It is suggested to join Tables 8, 9 and 10 in one, mentioning only the most relevant results. Please explain in Table 8, why p value of 0.04 is not considered significant as <0.05. In all Tables in the foot NOTE, % age should say only %.

Ans. All the three tables have been merged into one table and designated as **table 5** and %age is replaced by %.

**Discussion**

Q 10. It is suggested to discuss colonization and infection. It is suggested to include in this section the role of salivary flow in the colonization and infection of Candida sp in radiotherapy.
Ans. The colonization and infection has been discussed in the discussion portion and 4 new references has been added (39- 42). We have not studied the role of salivary flow so have not included in the discussion as mentioned by reviewers.

Q 11. It needs to state the limitations of the work
Ans. The limitation of the work has been mentioned at the end of the MS.

Q 12. The interpretation (discussion and conclusion) should refer in more depth to other relevant work. The clarity and/or coherence of the paper need to be improved.
Ans. Efforts has been done to clear the facts of the study in the discussion of the MS.

All the changes in the MS have been shown in yellow color.