Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 1 April 2012

Reviewer: Velia Ramìrez Amador

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Introduction

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.

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).

Methods

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.

Results

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.

In Table 2, it is suggested to add the percentages, not only the absolute numbers.

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 %.

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

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 %.
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 %.
Discussion
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.
It needs to state the limitations of the work
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.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being
published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
'I declare that I have no competing interests'