Reviewer’s report

Title: Effects of tongue cleaning on bacterial flora in tongue coating and dental plaque: A crossover study

Version: 1 Date: 10 November 2013

Reviewer: Kazuyuki Ishihara

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript describes the effect of influence of tongue cleaning on microflora of dental plaque and tongue coating. The manuscript was well written and the results are clear. Reviewer recommends to revise several points to improve the manuscript.

1. In the whole manuscript, species name should be italics.
2. Page 3 line 13. Periodontal bacteria should be periodontopathic bacteria or periodonal pathogen.
3. Page 4 line 19. Furthermore, it has been...thickness yielding anaerobic condition. It is helpful to add more recent paper describing F. nucleatum growth.
4. Page 5 line 5. ...antibiotic or other antimicrobial therapy. It is helpful to indicate the period before the experiment.
5. Page 7 line 5. Immediately after determining wet weight,.... As the weight is very low, it is helpful to add the equipment to measure the weight.
6. Page 7 line 10. DNA was extracted from samples using a Wizard. The yield of DNA from gram positive bacteria is different among the commercial kit. In the manuscript, only gram negative bacteria was used and author indicated the mass of tongue coating and the number of bacteria. If author show the preliminary data that indicate the yield of DNA from gram positive bacteria such as streptococci, it strengthen the results in the paper.
7. Page 8 line 12... 16S rRNA universal and F. nucleatum.... Did author use universal primers for bacteria? Author indicated the primers for E. coli.
8. Page 9 line 9. ..between the first and second baseline easurements after the 3- week.... Where is the data?
9. Page 9n line 15. The meaning of aggregation level is unclear.
10. Total bacteria of dental plaque was decreased group with and without tongue cleaning. Author should discuss about the decrease.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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.