Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevalence of recurrent aphthous ulceration in Jordanian dental patients

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Professor Koutsos,

Thank you and the reviewers for reviewing our manuscript titled “Prevalence of aphthous ulceration in Jordanian dental patients.” I have revised the manuscript along the lines that the reviewer suggested. I feel that the reviewer’s comments have led to a much improved paper, and I am grateful for their careful reviews.

I have sent a copy of the revised manuscript along with this letter, with changes to the manuscript in bold type. Below, I detail how I addressed the comments of the referees.

**Answers of referees comments: Referee # 1, Prof. Borra**

Comment 1 The aphthous ulceration profile in Jordanian subjects follow the same characteristics of the disease in others places in the world with exception of the prevalence which seem to be higher (78%). Smoking habit and frequency of crises were not informed. These data are important to understand the higher prevalence of disease found in the study.

Answer: The number of smokers in our sample was 122 subjects representing 31% of the sample. Male patients were found to be more smokers (39%) than female patients (24%). The following statement "About 31% of participants were smokers and male smokers were found to be more prevalent (39%) than female smokers (24%)." was added to the end of the first paragraph of the result section, page 5.

Unfortunately, we did not ask patients about the frequency of crises that they suffered.

Comment 2 The author reported that 39.5% of patients were submitted to blood testing. It is not clear if the tests were conducted during or before the study. If before, details about type of tests should be described in methods section.”

Answer: In the present study, each patient was asked if he/she could give a sample of blood during that visit. Two hundreds and seventy individuals
gave the blood sample and then samples were tested in the hematology lab for B12 and hemoglobin.

Comment 3: The name of disease should be changed from aphthous ulceration to recurrent aphthous ulceration.

Answer: All phrases of "aphthous ulcerations" through out the paper were replaced with "recurrent aphthous ulceration" using find and replace tool of the MS word. Note that the title was changed too.

Answers of referees comments: Referee # 2, Prof. Lamey

Major compulsory revisions.

Comment 1: There seems to be some confusion as to what number of patients had blood tests undertaken. In the abstract, we are told 39% but on page 5 this becomes 61%. Clarification please!

Answer: The number of patients who participated in blood testing were 270, representing 39% of participants.

The statement in page 5 "... about 61% of participants agree to a blood test as part of an investigation of the cause of aphthous ulcer " has been corrected to "Regarding blood test results, about 39% of participants agree to have a blood test as part of an investigation of the cause of aphthous ulcer"

Comment 2: "There is no laboratory test for aphthous ulceration so the sentence on page 3, paragraph 3 line2 should be omitted.3.

Answer: I agree with the referee. The sentence "A laboratory test to confirm diagnosis is not needed in most patients" on page 3, paragraph 3 line2 was omitted.

Comment 3. In the discussion-third paragraph -what was the question asked? For example were patients asked if they have ever in their life suffered?
Answer: The sentence in paragraph 3, discussion, was changed from "Subjects were asked to recall if they had aphthous ulceration before" to "Subjects were asked, "have you ever suffered aphthous ulceration in your life."

Comment 4: The sentence "Few patients.." is confusing. If a patient failed to recall ulcers surely that would lower the not as is quoted make it higher.

Answer: The sentences in paragraph 3, page 6, discussion, was changed from "Few patients might fail to recall if they had this condition before, therefore higher figure of aphthous ulceration occurrence might be anticipated." to "Few patients were considered not having aphthous ulcers because they could no recall if they had this condition in their life, therefore aphthous ulceration occurrence for those patients might be unrealistic."

Minor essential revisions

Comment 1: coeliac is spelt wrongly.

Answer: The word "celiac" was quoted as is from the study published in the triple O journal, reference number 7. Therefore, I cannot change the word in the reference since it was written in American English in the pubmed site.

Comment 2: How many patients were actually attending with aphthous as their main complaint?

Answer: Patient were attendants of the dental center for variety of reasons. Most of them were having dental appointment, however, few were attended the initial treatment unit for dental problems including pulpitis and gingivitis. I believe less than 2% of patients were having their main complaint as symptoms of aphthous ulceration.