Reviewer's report

Title: Preliminary estimation of the prevalence of taste alteration induced by recently approved chemotherapy in Japanese cancer survivors

Version: 3 Date: 26 August 2013

Reviewer: Sriram Yennu

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript could be of great interest to the readers if the authors could clarify the following sentences:

Abstract:
(1) In the background section, the use of the words "prompt method" is unclear
(2) The authors should consider to include the first sentence of the methods (which seems to be the main objective of the study) in the background session.
(3) In the methods section, the author need to explain the design of the study, e.g., a cohort study design was used to obtain pilot data to determine the prevalence of taste disturbance...
(4) Results section should clarify the main outcome of the study: "prevalence of taste disturbance..."
(5) More appropriate to use the term "older"..or related term instead of "elder"
(6) The result section should state the n, % rather than the relative risk.

The conclusions needs to be rewritten as the paper test strip was not discussed in methods. The use of word "association" rather than use of "considerable" or "due to chemotherapy"s.

Manuscript:
(1) The Introduction is well written except for a brief introduction of paper test strips, its prior use. This would be helpful to justify the study (rationale).
(2) Results: the patient characteristics (page 8) is already well summarized in Table 1. The author should to only include the key points in the text such as the "the frequency (n,%) of taste disturbance and treatment types..."
(3) Results: Authors should consider clarification of Page 8, para 2, sentence "even patients off..."
(4) Authors should consider to rearrange the discussion section for a better flow. An example they consider.. "the first paragraph could focus on the main and the most interesting finding of the frequency of taste disturbance. the second paragraph could focus on the novelty of the use of paper strip/ grading of taste disturbance and how it differs from the conventional methods of estimation of taste disturbance. The next paragraph needs to discuss the importance of the finding " increased frequency of taste disturbance in patients on 5FU. May
discuss the possibility of future studies based on this finding. The following paragraph could discuss future intervention studies as detailed in the first paragraph of discussion. The last paragraph of the discussion should comment on the limitations such as sample size...attrition. Thankyou for the opportunity to review this interesting study.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests