

# THE TOBACCO INSTITUTE

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Dr. Takeshi Hirayama  
Chief, Epidemiology Division  
National Cancer Centre Research  
Institute  
1-1 Tsukiji, 5-Chome, Chuo-ku  
Tokyo, 104 Japan

Dear Dr. Hirayama:

I have read with interest your British Medical Journal paper on lung cancer and nonsmoking wives. From a statistical point of view your article raises several questions whose answers are necessary for my scientific understanding of your findings. I would appreciate your response to the following requests:

1. Your paper deals with the same study population of 265,118 persons you have reported on during the past fifteen years. When and where were all the demographic and lifestyle data, such as smoking and occupation histories, recorded? Who gathered these data and what type of training did they have? Please furnish a copy of the questionnaire that was used. It would also be extremely helpful to me if you would send a copy of the data file - preferably in computer-readable form. I would be willing to pay the necessary expenses.
2. One of your groups of husbands included both nonsmokers and occasional smokers. How is an occasional smoker defined? How many occasional smokers are in this group? Why were these two classes combined? Another group of husbands consisted of ex-smokers and smokers of 19 or fewer cigarettes daily. How many ex-smokers were included in this group? Why were these two classes combined?
3. Did you measure the times, if any, that the nonsmoking wives were present when their husbands smoked? If yes, how was this done?
4. Is the mortality information you have reported based on death certificates? If not, from what sources did you obtain this information? If so, how have you assessed the reliability of these records? How do you reconcile your use of these records with Japanese studies reported in 1977 by Hiyoshi and others in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, and in 1975 by the Radiation Effects Research Foundation on the accuracy of cancer diagnoses?

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