

## **Author's response to reviews**

**Title:** Susceptibility to heat wave-related mortality: a follow-up study of a cohort of elderly in Rome

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over

Dear Editor, we have prepared a reviewed version of the manuscript. You will find in this cover letter a point by point answer to the referee. Thank you for your attention. Looking forward to hearing from you, I send you my best regards,

Patrizia Schifano

## **Answer to Mercedes Medina-Ramon**

Dear reviewer, thank you for your remarks and suggestions. We have taken into account all the points raised in your revision. They are described below.

### Major revision

1. As the reviewer correctly says the p-value usually used to indicate that an association is statistically significant is 0.05. However it is also known that statistical tests for interactions are less powerful than those for simple associations. This is the reason for which it is common use in statistical analysis to choose a less conservative approach when performing this kind of tests. The most frequently used p-value in this case is  $p < 0.10$  but also  $p < 0.15$  or  $p < 0.20$  are used. You can check other works using this same criteria. We think that to explain it in the paper would not be relevant because this practice is quite common. You can find an example in *Fernandes et al. Rev Saude Publica 2009; 43 (2): 326-34*, just to cite a recent publication.
2. In the result section additive and multiplicative interactions were specified and also the tables give to the reader the same information. Taking into account the reviewer's suggestion we have also added a short sentence on this in the first paragraph of the discussion section (page 9). We hope this can help for a better understanding of our results.

### Minor essential revisions

1. we turned to past tense in the result section of the abstract
2. thank you for remarking, we corrected the figure at page 8
3. we agree with the referee and changed the sentence accordingly (see page 13)