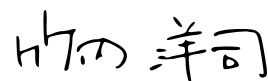


BIOSTATISTICS

I certificate the biostatistics used in this article were reviewed by biomedical statistician.

Handwritten signature of Yoji Takeuchi in black ink.

Yoji Takeuchi, MD

Department of Gastrointestinal Oncology

Osaka Medical Center for Cancer and Cardiovascular Diseases