ally is consistent with the criteria of a typical case-control study.

However, to our surprise, the study method was described as “a retrospective cross-sectional chart study.” Cross-sectional studies are designated to observe a sample of population at just 1 particular point of time. They are thus fundamentally different from longitudinal studies.²

We would appreciate if the respected journal could clarify our confusion by a brief note of explanation.

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REFERENCES

HIV and tooth loss

In reply:
I reviewed the comments in the recent letter to the editor regarding our paper “HIV and tooth loss.” Our work has both cross-sectional and longitudinal elements, because we compared the HIV-infected individuals with control subjects at a single initial time point as well as examined the changes over time in the 2 groups.

As such, the author of the letter makes a good point that we did not indicate the longitudinal nature of the study when we called it a “cross-sectional study.” We did, however, describe accurately what we did in the methods, including examining the data at different time points. Our failure to refer to the study as a “longitudinal study” does not change the validity of the data nor the conclusions expressed in the paper.

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