In the meantime, we suggest that all studies reporting on seasonality should utilize individual patient data, provide estimates of the day of the peak date with a CI and report on magnitude.

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## Seasonal variations in the diagnosis of childhood cancer - reply

We thank Machin and Gao for their interest in our paper exploring seasonal variations in the diagnosis of childhood cancer. As they note, different statistical tests have been used to evaluate seasonal variations, and although these tests are statistically valid, they might not make full use of the data. We appreciate Machin and Gao's application of the Fisher method to our data. The Fisher method does provide a bit more precision than Roger's test (including an estimate of the strength of the peak). The conclusions of our paper, however, remain. Moreover, it is unclear how clinically useful it is to identify a peak that occurs on a specific day rather than within a season. Finally, we agree with Machin and Gao that a formal meta-analysis of all papers describing seasonality in the diagnosis of childhood cancer may be helpful; we look forward to when this analysis is conducted.

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