Response to comments:

We now re-submit our manuscript having taken into account the reviewers’ comments and responding accordingly, to the best of our knowledge. As requested, in the marked version of the manuscript all changes are indicated in red.

Below, we describe our response point-by-point to the comments raised by the two reviewers and indicate the corresponding changes made in the manuscript.

Reviewer Hiroaki Satoh raised two points. In the first point we have been asked to explain to what extent our results on hnRNP A1 provide new information as to the pathological diagnosis of lung cancer. We have addressed this point in the Discussion by revising the entire last paragraph starting on page 18, whereupon we have clarified the extent to which our findings can currently address this issue.

With respect to the second point, which is somewhat related to the first one, we admit that the statement on the hnRNP A1 as a “potential novel biomarker for lung cancer diagnosis” is rather strong and in order to be valid would have required additional studies that were beyond our current work. We, thus, decided to play down this issue and have removed and re-phrased the statement made in the Conclusion part of the Abstract (page 2), as well as in the Discussion, end of the second paragraph on page 18.

Reviewer Haiming Wei raised three points. We have answered the first point on the specificity of the hnRNP A1 over-expression with the sentence added in the Discussion on the last paragraph of page 15.

The second point, on the definition of the over-expression by the fold change of T/N>2 for the protein and T/N> 1.5 for the mRNA, is addressed in the Results, page 9 (second paragraph) and page 12 (second paragraph), respectively.
The third point, which brings about the issue of the criteria in selecting a control area of the lung as a good standard, is addressed in the new paragraph appearing in the Discussion on page 17.

The reference to the approval of our study by a proper ethics committee is made in the Methods, sub-section Tissue samples and patients, on page 5. We also attach the relevant letter of the Metaxa Cancer Hospital Bioethics Committee, for your information.

Finally, we have made several minor language corrections throughout the Text (not highlighted in red) in an effort to improve the language, as commented by one of the reviewers.

We hope that we have responded properly and efficiently to the comments raised by the reviewers and we look forward to hearing your final decision on our revised manuscript.

Thanking you a lot
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