Author's response to reviews

Title: Deregulated expression of hnRNP A/B proteins in human non-small cell lung cancer: parallel assessment of protein and mRNA levels in paired tumor /non-tumor tissues

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Response to comments:

We now submit our re-revised manuscript having taken into account the new comments raised and responding accordingly, to the best of our knowledge. The new changes are indicated in red throughout the text.

Firstly, we responded to the Editorial request and used a professional copyediting service to improve on the language usage. The text was formatted in English UK and almost all recommended changes were adopted (editing changes are not indicated in color but they are available upon request). We have also adopted a comment referring to the title of the manuscript and have replaced the word “correlation” with “parallel assessment” as a more accurate term.

With reference to the new comments raised by reviewer H. Satoh:

1. We have replaced Table 1 with a new version that takes into consideration the new (version 7th) TNM classification of the lung cancer (see also comment in Results, first paragraph, page 8).

2. With respect to the expression of hnRNP A1 in the cytoplasm of the lung cancer cells shown in Figure 3 (and after re-examining several IHC pictures) we made it clear that there was “practically undetected cytoplasmic staining” (page 11, second paragraph).

3. We responded to the comment of not including all 21 patients in some of the assays shown in Tables 2 and 3 by providing the reasoning in the Results section, where most appropriate (see last paragraph of page 8, second paragraph of page 10 and last paragraph of page 12). We also wish to state here that this was not a selection bias, but rather a technical limitation.

To our opinion, reviewer H. Wei is not posing specific questions that could be
easily addressed. Nonetheless, with respect to the questioning on the diagnostic importance of hnRNP A1 over-expression, we have made it clear at several points in the Discussion that this was not the aim of this present study (see last paragraph of page 18 and closing statement in the Conclusion, page 20). As to the second point related to our definition of over-expression, we wish to re-state that by deliberately applying stringent criteria (i.e. raising the threshold) in the estimate of T/N fold changes, both of protein and mRNA levels, we have in fact underestimated the detected up-regulation of hnRNP A/B in lung cancer cells.

We have made every possible effort to respond properly and efficiently to the new comments. Taking into account the long period that our manuscript remains under consideration, we anticipate a quick decision as to its final acceptance or not.

Looking forward to hearing from you as soon as possible

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