Author's response to reviews

Title: Association between the Cytotoxic T-Lymphocyte Antigen 4 +49G>A polymorphism and cancer risk: a meta-analysis

Authors:

- Jian Zheng (zhengjian616@163.com)
- Xiao Yu (yuxiao@suda.edu.cn)
- Lan Jiang (jiangnanchenwu@126.com)
- Mang Xiao (joelxm@hotmail.com)
- Bing Bai (baibing19890717@126.com)
- Xu Han (xhan19871120@yahoo.com.cn)
- Yunsen Li (yunsenli@suda.edu.cn)
- Haiyan Liu (hliu@suda.edu.cn)
- Jiachun Lu (jiachunlu@163.com)
- Yifeng Zhou (zhouyifeng@suda.edu.cn)

Version: 3 Date: 18 August 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for your letter and advice. We have revised the paper, according to reviewers, and responded point by point to the comments as listed below. We hope that the revised manuscript is acceptable for publication.

Thank you.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Yifeng Zhou

Replies to Reviewers

We would like to thank the reviews for the constructive and positive comments.

Replies to Reviewer 1

1. There are no page numbers, making it difficult to identify sections. I am not familiar with the term yellow race to identify ethnicity. Asian might be a better category?

---We have corrected as suggested.

2. Page 2 of results, top. These studies could be identified by reference rather than by first author’s name.

---We have corrected as suggested.

3. Quantitative data synthesis section. The text needs to be reworded into complete sentences as it is often difficult to follow.

---We have corrected as suggested.

4. Comparing major influences: ethnicity. I was unclear which groups were included in the Caucasians and the yellow races and which groups were remaining. This needs to be clarified in the methods. This also pertains to discussion last page where it is stated that Caucasians, yellow race and Chinese might have a much higher association with the polymorphism. It was not clear which ethnic group was remaining, which might not show an association. Tumor type: it is difficult to get a feel from the way the results are presented which tumor types are associated with the variant. The figures present some data on certain tumors e.g. breast cancer, but
it would help to have a figure showing all studies, as identified by cancer type rather than by first author. It may be helpful to compare epithelial vs non-epithelial tumors, given the associations with breast and skin and not with non-solid tumors.

--We re-wrote the section “Data extraction and stratification” to clarify the ethnic group. For the tumor type, we added one more figure (Figure 5) to compare epithelial and non-epithelial tumors and some sentences in “Discussion”.

5. Figures 2-5 should be reformatted to be more user-friendly for the reader. The intent of the figure should be clear and the information should be conveyed so the reader can grasp the message. At the moment these figures look like print-outs from a statistical program.

--- Thanks for your comments. We re-made the figures.

Other comments:

1. Please redo the statistical evaluation with help of a professional statistician

---Yes, we recalculated the data by Prof. Lu, a professor in Epidemiology and Statistics.

2. We recommend that you copyedit the paper to improve the style of written English. If this is not possible, you may need to use a professional copyediting service. Examples are those provided by the Manuscript Presentation Service (www.biomedes.co.uk), International Science Editing (http://www.internationalscienceediting.com/) and English Manager Science Editing (http://www.scienecmanager.com/). BioMed Central has no first-hand experience of these companies and can take no responsibility for the quality of their service.

---Yes. We asked a Professional English Editing Corporation to re-edit the paper.

3. Experimental research that is reported in the manuscript must have been performed with the approval of an appropriate ethics committee. Research carried out on humans must be in compliance with the Helsinki Declaration (http://www.wma.net/e/policy/b3.htm), and any experimental research on animals must follow internationally recognized guidelines. A statement to this effect must appear in the Methods section of the manuscript, including the name of the body which gave approval, with a reference number where appropriate.

---Although this meta-analysis was a descriptive study, it was a part work of a project supported by the National Nature Science Foundation that was approved by the Medical Ethics Committee of Soochow University.
4. Please include an Authors' contributions section before the Acknowledgements and Reference list.

--Thanks for your comments. We added a paragraph in the revised manuscript

5. Table 1 is very large. It may be better to include this table as an Additional File in spreadsheet format, to improve readability.

--We have corrected as suggested.