Reviewer’s report

Title: C-reactive protein in patients with advanced metastatic renal cell carcinoma: Usefulness in identifying patients most likely to benefit from initial nephrectomy

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Reviewer: Adam Metwalli

Reviewer’s report:

1) the methodological flaws in this manuscript are too much to reconcile since this is a non-randomized group of patients and there is clearly a selection bias in any comparison between the nephrectomy and non-nephrectomy groups since the latter were clearly more advanced/unresectable/non-surgical candidates. Therefore any comparison of that group with the group that underwent surgery is virtually meaningless. This is demonstrated by the difference in PS between the two groups in Table 1.

2) I would reconsider the classification of a CRP<18 as low since you state that the upper limit of normal is >3.0. Perhaps mildly elevated, elevated and highly elevated would be more appropriate categories.

3) I think the prognostic significance of the various levels of CRP is interesting and this finding could potentially be practice changing if a highly elevated CRP proves to be a significant indicator of such poor prognosis that patients are not cytoreductive nephrectomy candidates.

4) in section 3.4 the abbreviation PS is used but I do not see it used that way anywhere else in the manuscript. In the abbreviations table and in the "Clinical and Laboratory Assessment" section it is ECOG PS which is used earlier in that section 3.4 but then PS is used by itself. Perhaps you should change (ECOG PS) to (PS) and then it might be clearer.

5) There is a significant formatting difference between Table 1 which is clearly legible and Table 2. which is not. This will need to be fixed.

6) I would spend more time explaining to your target audience (urologists) what factors go into an elevated CRP and perhaps a paragraph discussing what confounding variables were not included in the multivariable analysis and why.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.
Declaration of competing interests:

I have no conflicts of interest nor anything to declare.