Author's response to reviews

Title: CD133 expression is not an independent prognostic factor in stage II and III colorectal cancer but may predict the better outcome in patients with adjuvant therapy

Authors:

Khalilullah Mia Jan Dr (khalilullahkliwal@googlemail.com)
So Young Jung MS (linas21@nate.com)
Ik-Yong Kim MD, PhD (iykim@yonsei.ac.kr)
Sung Soo Oh MD, PhD (oss0609@yonsei.ac.kr)
EunHee Choi PhD (eunhee_choi@yonsei.ac.kr)
Sei Jin Chang PhD (chang0343@yonsei.ac.kr)
Tae Young Kang MT (itty-95@hanmail.net)
Mee-Yon Cho MD, PhD (meeyon@yonsei.ac.kr)

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor-in Chief,

We are electronically submitting a manuscript titled “CD133 expression is not an independent prognostic factor in stage II and III colorectal cancer but may predict the better outcome in patients with adjuvant therapy,” which we would like to be considered for publication in “BioMed Cancer”. In this retrospective study of 271 stage II & III primary human colorectal cancers, we systematically analyzed CD133 expression by IHC and real-time Q-PCR and promoter methylation by pyrosequencing. We documented a significant correlation of IHC with real-time Q-PCR and inverse correlation with promoter’s methylation. We found that there is no prognostic significance of CD133 expression in stage II and III colorectal cancers. However CD133+ tumors were significantly associated with better overall survival in patients with adjuvant therapy compared with those without adjuvant therapy (p<0.0001, HR 0.125, 95%CI 0.052-0.299). It means that CD133 IHC expression may signify the benefit for adjuvant therapy in stage II and III CRCs, although it is not an independent prognostic factor. Furthermore, we describe that CD133 expression in non-neoplastic colorectal mucosa is much less than that of stomach and pancreas. Since the exact role of CD133 as a cancer stem cell marker is yet controversial, our findings will enlighten to some extent the ambiguities regarding the distribution, pattern and role of CD133 in colorectal cancers.

1. This manuscript is original.

2. We have all made a substantial contribution to this manuscript that is being submitted for publication.
3. We have no direct or indirect commercial financial incentive associated with publishing this article.

4. This manuscript is not under consideration by another journal or electronic publication, and it has not previously been published.

5. We followed the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki.

Sincerely,

Mee-Yon Cho, MD, PhD