Reviewer's report

Title: Circulating tumor cells and survival of patients with gastric cancer: a meta-analysis

Version: 6  Date: 21 August 2014

Reviewer: Zhen-Ning Wang

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Reviewer's report

The authors conducted a meta-analysis on prognostic role of CTCs detected in patients with gastric cancer. It is hot topic for investigators and clinicians.

Comments

The authors have revised the manuscript and improved most of the mentioned points. I have the following comments:

1. In my opinion, the authors did not well solve the problem on redundant studies based on potential same patients' population, such as in inclusion criteria: “(3) studies from the same institutions were included if they reported different markers or applied different methods”. I am afraid that there is still considerable impact caused by redundant studies. The authors should try to conduct adequate and in-depth analyses to eliminate the impact of redundant studies.

2. To further validate the reliability of results, the authors should conduct in-depth analysis with/without these studies on microRNA.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests