Author’s response to reviews

Title: Predicting Prognosis in Hepatocellular Carcinoma after Curative Surgery with Common Clinicopathologic Parameters

Authors:

Ke Hao (ke_hao@merck.com)
John M Luk (jmluk@nus.edu.sg)
Nikki P Lee (nikkilee@hkucc.hku.hk)
Mao Mao (mao_mao@merck.com)
Chunsheng Zhang (Chunsheng_Zhang@merck.com)
Mark D Ferguson (Mark_Ferguson@merck.com)
John R Lamb (John_Lamb3@merck.com)
Hongyue Dai (hongyue_dai@merck.com)
Irene O Ng (iolng@hkusua.hku.hk)
Pak C Sham (pcsham@hkucc.hku.hk)
Ronnie T Poon (poontp@hkucc.hku.hk)

Version: 4 Date: 25 September 2009

Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear the Editor,

Thank you very much for sharing the insightful comments from you and the reviewers. Only reviewer#2 has outstanding questions, and we have addressed these questions in the R2 version. Please see the point-by-point response and the updated manuscript for details. The authors feel the revision have greatly improved the manuscript in terms of statistical rigor and scientific significance. Please feel free to contact us if you need additional information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,

John M. Luk
Reviewer#2 Tim Greten

Reviewer's report:
The authors should revise the following points:

1. Surgery is regarded as the standard... The authors still have not changed the wording the revised version.
   The reviews comment is well taken. We rewrote the sentence as "surgery is regarded as the one of the standard curative treatments of HCC if the tumor is resectable [4, 5]." (page 3; line 4-5)

2. ok
3. ok
4. ok
5. ok

6. This needs to be added to the manuscript text
   In the R1 version, the detailed definition of smoking and drinking was stated in the table legend. Herein, we also added it to the manuscript text, "In addition we also obtained self-reported life-style parameters such as cigarette smoking (moderate smoking: \( \leq 1 \) pack/day; heavy smoking: \( >1 \) pack/day) and alcohol drinking (moderate drinking: \( \leq 2 \) drinks/per day; heavy drinking>2 drinks/per day)." (page 5; line 6-9).

7. This should be discussed in the manuscript.
   The reviewer's comment is well-taken. In the revision, we added, " Some patients with > 6 tumor nodules also received surgery and included in this study, given that good liver functions were indicated and the tumors were not near any major vessels and grouped into 1 or 2 clusters." (page 4; line 5-8)