Reviewer's report

Title: Perioperative blood transfusion adversely affects prognosis after resection of lung cancer: A meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 25 March 2014

Reviewer: Juan Cata

Reviewer's report:

Dear Editor

I had the great opportunity of reviewing the manuscript entitled "Perioperative blood transfusion adversely affects prognosis after resection of lung cancer: A meta-analysis". I had to congratulate the authors for their work. They conducted a meta-analysis of retrospective studies that looked at the association between BT and RFS and/or OS after cancer surgery. The authors concluded that such association might be real although they also recognize the limitations of the study.

I have some few comments and concerns regarding the current version of the manuscript.

Overall comments.
1- This is an article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
2- Statistical analysis is sound but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Major concerns and comments.
1- The authors have analyzed data from studies in which staging was not taken into consideration. In fact they recognize this as a significant limitation. However, I would suggest to add an analysis of the data by staging of the disease.

2- The authors mentioned that a RCT would never be conducted because of potential ethical issues. I disagree with them a RCT study can be done if appropriate triggers for transfusions are used and then stratification based on number of units is done. Please clarify because the reader might conclude that a RCT would be not ethical.

3- Please also clarify the issue between single vs multiple units transfused since there might be an association between the number of units and worse outcomes.

4- Please also clarify whether autologous BT were included in the analysis.

5- Please comment on the timing of BT. Were all given intraop, postop or perioperative. If possible subanalyze the data based on this.
6- Figs and tables are very well done and clear.

Minor concerns
1- The manuscript would benefit from editorial assistance in terms of grammar and orthography.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests