This retrospective study by Gupta et al. investigates the optimal cut off level of standard BIA phase angle (PA) for the identification of malnutrition in patients with advanced colorectal cancer. Subjective global assessment is taken as a reference in a population of 73 patients with cancer. The main finding of this study is, that a single cut off level of the phase angle may not be suitable in this specific patient population because only values lower than 5.2° give acceptable diagnostic specificity (80%) and only values lower than 6.0° give acceptable diagnostic sensitivity (83%). The authors point out that further research may be needed to determine a definite cut off level. This paper is overall clear and well written. The statistical methodology is appropriate and has all the right elements needed. I have some minor comments.

Minor Essential Revisions

1) The phase angle was found to be non-normally distributed: this observation is in contrast to results of most other studies which looked at the PA of healthy or hospitalized patients. What is the explanation?

2) The sample was not 81 patients, because 8 patients weren’t classified by SGA. All the information about data in paper should be changed to 73 patients, that were, in fact, the real sample that could be studied.

3) Page 7, line 4: The frequency is 50 kHz, not Khz.

4) Page 7, statistical analysis paragraph: The non-normally distribution of phase angle could be an effect of the small sample. Barbosa-Silva and Barros (Am J Clin Nutr 2005; 82:49 – 52) presented the phase angle results of 1967 volunteers, and they found that phase angle has a normal distribution. Please comment on this in the discussion section.

5) Page 9, line 1, it should not be called a “patient cohort” because it was a transversal study.

6) Page 11, discussion section, line 11: The comment about the correlation should be deleted.

7) Hydration status in cancer patients are often due to treatment, just observing
“obvious” signs of hydration may have overlooked changes that could further have influenced measurement validity. The authors should discuss this.

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

**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'