Reviewer’s report

Title: Bronchus sign on thin-section CT is a powerful predictive factor for successful transbronchial biopsy using endobronchial ultrasound with a guide sheath for small peripheral lung lesion: A retrospective observational study

Version: 4 Date: 20 January 2015

Reviewer: Dominik Harzheim

Reviewer’s report:

Dear Editor,

thank you for appointing me to review the manuscript „Bronchus sign on thin-section CT is a powerful predictive factor for successful transbronchial biopsy using endobronchial ultrasound with a guide sheath for small peripheral lung lesion: A retrospective observational study“ from T Minezawa and colleagues and please apologize my late response.

The manuscript retrospectively analysis factors associated with the diagnostic yield of sampling pulmonary nodules (<3cm). Strengths include the timeliness and relevance of the topic to clinical practice. However it adds little to the literature. Many of the conclusions and recommendations are presented as statements of fact and should be expressed more careful especially when based on an analysis of a small retrospective cohort. Before publication the language requires revision.

Minor Essential Revisions:

- Diagnostic yield is known to increase with the amount of biopsies taken. How many biopsies were taken and did this influence the results presented in this paper?
- Line 91-93: absolutistic statements like this, based on one small retrospective study should be avoided. Another study, combing different guiding technics could provide an even higher diagnostic yield (Eberhardt et al., Am J Respir Crit Care Med. 2007).
- Line 99: alternative procedures ARE available
- Line 100-102: grammatical incorrect and incompressive sentence
- Line 104-106: again, statements like this, based on one small retrospective study should be avoided. Better: Based on our analysis... seems to be the... etc.
- Line 127: “responsible” -> respective etc.
- Line 130-131: in typ C there is no bronchus sign – thus it should read: “We categorized the relation of bronchus and lesion..”
- Line 133: incorrect english “introduced to inside”
- Line 161: diagnostic yield not diagnosis yield
Before accepting this manuscript for publication those points should be addressed.

Best regards

Dominik Harzheim MD

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.