Author's response to reviews

Title: STK33 overexpression in hypopharyngeal squamous cell carcinoma: possible role in tumorigenesis

Authors:

Lingyan Huang (kaixinhly@hotmail.com)
Chen Chen (doctorchchen@163.com)
Guodong Zhang (doctorzhdong@163.com)
Yuanrong Ju (doctorjyrong@163.com)
Jianzhong Zhang (doctorzhjzhong@163.com)
Haibo Wang (wang.hb7585@hotmail.com)
Jianfeng Li (lijianfeng@hotmail.com)

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Prof. Annie Lyn Bravo:

Thank you so much for your kind e-mail relevant to the issue for the publication of our manuscript (MS: 1100756891412223), titled “STK33 overexpression in hypopharyngeal squamous cell carcinoma: possible role in tumorigenesis”, in your journal.

We appreciate the reviewers’ comments and suggestions and our responses are listed below.

To Dr Chih-Yen Chien:

Thank you so much for offering us the opportunity to revise and re-look into our manuscript. This revision-making process not only allows us to see our manuscript from the perspective of others, but helps us to do future work as well. We really appreciate.

According to the reviewers’ comments and suggestions, we have tried our best, except the in vivo study, just as mentioned by reviewer #2, to revise our manuscript.

In view of the available data and the objective comments by all three reviewers, we cordially hope that our manuscript in the present form will reach your threshold for publication.

To reviewer #1:

We appreciate the reviewer’s comments.

In line with the reviewer’s requirement, we, again, turned to a native English teacher and a statistician for help. We have tried our best to correct the errors in interpretation and statistical mistakes in the newly presented text.

To reviewer #2:
We really appreciate the reviewer’s recognition for our work.

Currently, an in vivo study is being conducted by another Ph.D student in our lab, an essential experiment representing as the natural extension of the research on STK33 in HSCC.

To reviewer # 3:

We really appreciate the reviewer’s comments and suggestions.

1) Precisely, these 30 patients were randomly selected from 97 patients suffering from pathologically proven HSCC. As any treatment, either chemotherapy or radiotherapy, prior to surgery, may affect the expression of STK33 in resected specimen, thus, all these 30 samples were obtained from the patients who only underwent surgical therapy.

Of these 67 patients who were excluded from this study, 8 were subjected to radiotherapy alone, 4 to chemotherapy alone, 17 to concomitant chemoradiotherapy, 4 to induction chemotherapy followed by radiotherapy, 29 to induction chemotherapy followed by chemoradiotherapy, and 5 to chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy followed by surgery.

2) During a period of nearly 20 months, we concentrated on this study. Due to the limitation of availability of samples, head and neck cell lines and, also, the time, we are maximumly able to obtain these data presented in this manuscript. Indeed, one more cell line could strengthen the findings. This excellent suggestion will be of practical and theoretical benefit to our future experimental design.

We hope our manuscript in the present form will be qualified for publication in your esteemed journal finally.

Thank you so much for your kind consideration!

Best wishes,

Jianfeng Li, Ph.D
Professor, Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery,
Provincial Hospital Affiliated to Shandong University,
Jinan 250021, P.R. China.
Tel: +86-136-58608819
E-mail: lijianfeng@hotmail.com