Author's response to reviews

Title: Poor prognosis of single hormone receptor-positive breast cancer: No difference with triple negative breast cancer

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Dear Dr. Editor

The manuscript entitled “Single hormone receptor-positive breast cancer and triple-negative breast cancer have a similarly poor prognosis” is being submitted for possible publication in the BMC cancer. The paper has been written according to the guidelines provided by the BMC cancer and has been seen and approved by all authors. The manuscript is new and is not being considered elsewhere.

About 70% of breast cancers are hormone receptor-positive (HR+) tumors. HR+ breast cancers generally have a favorable prognosis, but HR-negative (HR-) breast cancers have a poor prognosis. Single HR+ (ER+PR- and/or ER-PR+) breast cancers, especially ER+PR- breast cancers have poorer prognosis in comparison to double HR+ (ER+PR+) breast cancer. However, comparative studies of HR- (ER-PR-) breast cancers are very limited. Moreover, there have been limited studies on ER-PR+ tumors.

We have identified clinically and biologically distinct features of single HR+ breast cancers (both ER–PR+ tumors and ER+PR– tumors) through comparison with both ER+PR+ and ER-PR- tumors. Single HR+ breast cancers were associated with poorer survival than double HR+ tumors, in addition, single HR+ tumors had comparable poor survival to double HR- tumors. Moreover, we found that these significant differences of survival were only significant in breast cancer with HER2 overexpression. Therefore, to identify the cause of aggressiveness in single HR+ tumors, we have to see the issue from a different perspective.

We believe that you will be very interested in our study, and we thank you in advance for your kind consideration. I am looking forward to your reply.
Sincerely,
Seok Jin Nam M.D., Ph.D