Author’s response to reviews

Title: Long-term follow-up results of simultaneous integrated or late course accelerated boost with external beam radiotherapy to vaginal cuff for high risk cervical cancer patients after radical hysterectomy

Authors:

Xin Wang (wangxin213@sina.com)
Yaqin Zhao (zhaoyaqin@163.com)
Yali Shen (sylprecious@163.com)
Pei Shu (561022034@qq.com)
Zhiping Li (lizhiping620312@163.com)
Sen Bai (baisen@scu.edu.cn)
Feng Xu (18980601781@163.com)

Version: 4
Date: 18 March 2015

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The revisions according to the comments are listed as follows:

1. Q: "Please can you clarify whether the treatment protocols (arm A and B) were part of standard care at your institution and please clarify who determined treatment protocols for these patients and on what basis (please provide justification for different treatment courses)."

A: Thank you for your comment. We clarify that the treatment protocols (arm A and arm B) are part of standard care at our institution because brachytherapy is not available at our institution. And these two kinds of treatment protocols had been approved by West China Hospital institutional review board before we began to conduct these techniques in the clinic as an alternative to brachytherapy. The patients who had undergone adjuvant EBRT boost to vaginal cuff after radical hysterectomy with pelvic lymphadenectomy for a clinical stage IB-IIB cervical cancer, and had at least one of the following high risk factors after dissection: close margins, large tumors (> 4 cm), deep tromal invasion (defined as invasion into deeper half of the cervical wall), extensive lymphovascular invasion, positive pelvic lymph nodes, or parametrial involvement, could be chosen to receive one of the these treatment protocols. And the treatment protocols were determined by the treating physicians based on physicians’ own opinion.

2. Q: The quality of written English needs to be improved.

A: Thank you for your valuable suggestion. We had asked a native-English speaker in the Department of Radiation Oncology in USA to edit the language. We acknowledge him in the Acknowledgements. And we believe the language now would be much better than previous.