Reviewer's report

Title: Ki-67 as a prognostic marker in early-stage non-small cell lung cancer in Asian patients: a meta-analysis of published studies involving 31 studies

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Reviewer: Keyue Ding

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The manuscript by Dr. Wen et al. report results from a Meta-Analysis of 31 studies on Ki-67 as a prognostic marker in early-stage non-small cell lung cancer in Asian patients. And conclude that that elevated Ki-67 expression was associated with a poorer outcome in NSCLC patients, particularly in early-stage Asian ADC patients.

Major concerns:

1. Method used for synthesizing the Ki-67 prognostic effect: Please specify method used for synthesizing the Ki-67 prognostic effect (and reference) over studies included in the analysis, although it could infer that random effect mete-regression model could be used.

2. Variation of cutoff values for Ki-67 (range 5% to 50%) makes it difficult to get a precise estimate of the marker’s prognostic effect.

3. Lack of consideration of adjusting for confounders makes it difficult to judge the added value of Ki-67 as a potential prognostic factor (The analysis reveals that high Ki-67 is associated with a few poor prognostic factors of the population). Meta-regression model could be performed to adjust those factors that were found correlated to high K-67 levels.

4. The overall conclusions and discussion are overly simplified and sweeping in their interpretation of the results without considering potential limitations inherent in such a project, limitation of the analysis should be discussed in the discussion section.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests: I have no conflict of interest in review this manuscript.