Reviewer's report

Title: Prognostic significance of the cumulative dose of cisplatin during concurrent chemoradiotherapy for patients with advanced-stage nasopharyngeal carcinoma in an era of intensity-modulated radiotherapy

Version: 3

Date: 20 August 2015

Reviewer: Paolo Bossi

Reviewer's report:

The Authors globally improved the quality of the paper.

There are some minor points to be addressed:

1) Results: "Analysis of the prognostic implications of the cumulative dose of cisplatin among all patients stratified by EBV DNA levels"

The added sentence:
"In the subgroup analysis for low-risk group patients (EBV DNA <4000 copies/ml), the cumulative dose of cisplatin was significantly associated with a lower OS (P<0.001; Figure 3). In the multivariate analysis, the cumulative dose of cisplatin was significantly associated with OS in the patients of low-risk group (EBV DNA <4000 copies/ml) (P=0.009)."

could be shortened and simplified, not to be confusing for the reader. (minor)

2) Discussion.

After the sentence "The patterns of failure after IMRT predominantly result from distant metastases rather than local control. Therefore, the optimal cisplatin dose in CCRT regimes for NPC warrants further exploration"

it could be interesting to discuss the fact that it is possible that induction/adjuvant chemotherapy may cooperate with IMRT + cisplatin in reducing the risk of distant metastatization. The results of ongoing trials will help in answering this question.

(minor)

3) Discussion.

The sentence: "The low-risk group, which received a dose of cisplatin, was composed of only 8 patients, and therefore could be biased. Among the low-risk group receiving a dose of cisplatin #100 mg/m2, the cause of death for both was distant metastases"

is not clear (major)

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest.