Author’s response to reviews

Title: An inflammation-based cumulative prognostic score system in patients with diffuse large B cell lymphoma in rituximab era

Authors:

Feifei Sun (sunff@sysucc.org.cn)
Jia Zhu (zhujia@sysucc.org.cn)
Suying Lu (lusy@sysucc.org.cn)
Zijun Zheng (zhengzj@sysucc.org.cn)
Juan Wang (wangjuan@sysucc.org.cn)
Junting Huang (huangjt@sysucc.org.cn)
Musheng Zeng (zengmsh@sina.com)
Xiaofei Sun (sunxf@sysucc.org.cn)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear editors:

Thank you very much for your letter and advice. I am pleased to resubmit for publication the revised version of BCAN-D-16-02359R2 ‘An inflammation-based cumulative prognostic score system in patients with diffuse large B cell lymphoma in rituximab era’. I appreciate the constructive criticisms of the editors and reviewers and have incorporated the suggested changes into the manuscript to the best of my ability. The manuscript has certainly benefited from these insightful revision suggestions. Point by point responses to the reviewer and editor’s comments and the main improvements in the revised manuscript are listed below this letter.

Replies to the editor:

Specific Comments:
Please apply the following revisions to your manuscript:

1. Please add all authors' email addresses before the abstract.

2. Please add a 'Declarations' heading to your declarations section.

3. Authors’ contributions: Please add the phrase: "All authors read and approved the final manuscript."

4. Funding: Please add the phrase: "The funding body had no role in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript."

5. On uploading your revisions please remove all tracking/highlighting and instead upload a single clean version of the manuscript.

6. Please improve the resolution of figures 1 and 2.

Comment 1:
Please add all authors' email addresses before the abstract.

Response and improvements:
According the editor’s suggestion, we have added all authors' email addresses before the abstract (Page 1).

Comment 2:
Please add a 'Declarations' heading to your declarations section.
Response and improvements:

According the editor’s suggestion, we have added a 'Declarations' heading (line 58, Page 14).

Comment 3:

Authors’ contributions: Please add the phrase: "All authors read and approved the final manuscript.”

Response and improvements:

According the editor’s suggestion, we have added the phrase "All authors read and approved the final manuscript.” at the end of Authors’ contributions (line 37, page 15).

Comment 4:

Funding: Please add the phrase: "The funding body had no role in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript."

Response and improvements:

According the editor’s suggestion, we have added the phrase "The funding body had no role in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript." at the end of Funding (line 15, page 15).

Comment 5:

On uploading your revisions please remove all tracking/highlighting and instead upload a single clean version of the manuscript.
Response and improvements:

We have removed all tracking/highlighting and uploaded a single clean version of the manuscript.

Comment 6:

Please improve the resolution of figures 1 and 2.

Response and improvements:

We have improved the resolution to 300 dpi and resaved the figures into TIFF files with LZW compression.

Replies to Hao Wang (Reviewer 2):

Specific Comments:

The revised analysis looks fine with me. I have a few minor suggestions.

1. In the first line on Page 7, it should read "determined using time-dependent operating characteristic (ROC) analysis."

2. It would be good to describe the definitions of PFS and OS precisely. For example, PFS was defined as time from the date of diagnosis to the date of first lymphoma progression or death from any cause, or censored at the date of last follow-up for the patients who were alive and did not have lymphoma progression.

Comment 1:

In the first line on Page 7, it should read "determined using time-dependent operating characteristic (ROC) analysis."
Response:

Thank you for the reviewer’s suggestion, we have revised the sentence on the revised version (line1, page 7).

Main improvement:

The original text (in method section, statistical analysis, line1, page 7): The optimal cut-off values for six biomarkers (CRP, albumin levels, LMR, NLR, LPR and fibrinogen levels) for predicting OS were determined using receiver operating characteristic (ROC) analysis. A time-dependent ROC analysis was performed by ‘survival ROC package’ in R, version 3.3.3 (http://www.r-project.org/).

The revised text: The optimal cut-off values for six biomarkers (CRP, albumin levels, LMR, NLR, LPR and fibrinogen levels) for predicting OS were determined using a time-dependent operating characteristic (ROC) analysis, which was performed by ‘survival ROC package’ in R, version 3.3.3 (http://www.r-project.org/).

Comment 2:

It would be good to describe the definitions of PFS and OS precisely. For example, PFS was defined as time from the date of diagnosis to the date of first lymphoma progression or death from any cause, or censored at the date of last follow-up for the patients who were alive and did not have lymphoma progression.

Response:

Thank you for the reviewer’s suggestion, we have changed the sentences.
Main improvement:

The original text (in method section, statistical analysis, line51, page 6): PFS was defined from the date of diagnosis to first lymphoma progression, death from any cause, or last follow-up. OS was defined from the date of diagnosis to death from any cause or last follow-up.

The revised text: PFS was defined from the date of diagnosis to first lymphoma progression or death from any cause, or censored at the date of last follow-up for the patients who were alive and did not have lymphoma progression. OS was defined from the date of diagnosis to death from any cause, or censored at the date of last follow-up for the patients who were alive.