Reviewer’s report

Title: Intra-arterial ethanol embolization augments response to TACE for treatment of HCC with portal venous tumor thrombus

Version: 1 Date: 04 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Avo Artinyan

Reviewer’s report:

The author’s have revised the manuscript and have addressed my criticisms. I think the study clearly has limitations, which the authors identify, but the results and conclusions are valid in my opinion. I have two very minor questions/suggestions.

1. Sorafenib statistics were not clear to me, the authors state "However, the median overall survival (OS) gain with sorafenib is 5.5 months..." Did sorafenib cause an increase in survival of 5.5 months? This seems unlikely to me, or was overall survival with sorafenib increased to a median of 5.5 months?

2. The authors state that their study is the first to demonstrate that "this therapeutic approach is more effective than TACE..." With the limitations of the study, I would soften statements like these to something like, "this therapeutic approach may be more effective than TACE..."

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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