Reviewer’s report

Title: Irreversible electroporation versus radiotherapy after induction chemotherapy on survival in patients with locally advanced pancreatic cancer: a propensity score analysis

Version: 0 Date: 04 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Mehdi Ouaïssi

Reviewer's report:

Pancreatic adenocarcinoma is associated with the poorest prognosis among solid cancers. In the latest NCCN guidelines no clear recommendations have been made regarding LAPC, as chemotherapy and radiotherapy or an experimental treatment in clinical trials are to be considered.

IRE which provides cellular apoptosis without any thermal coagulation effect has been previously evaluated and showed promising results (doi: 10.4240/wjgs.v7.i8.138, doi: 10.1136/bmj.h521).

This new tumor ablation technique is safe and feasible and could improve local disease control in the LAPC group, nevertheless clinical evaluations are lacking.

This study is one of few reporting IRE’s benefit regarding overall survival (OS) and progression free survival (PFS) for LAPC compared to a more traditional approach (induction chemotherapy followed by radiotherapy). The authors should be commended for their innovative features.

In my opinion this article should be considered for publication.

Some corrections proposed

1. "Augest" must be written August.

2. In the "methods" section the past tense must be used.

3. Authors should give full term when using an abbreviation for the first time.

4. Too many abbreviations made the reading of the article tedious.

5. Since Radiotherapy benefits for LAPC are controversial (FFCDSFRO vs MD Anderson) is it opportune to compare IRE to a RT regimen?
6. Authors should report complications relative to each technique and overall toxicity; indeed the IRE's benefit compared to RT could be explained by differences in toxicity.

7. Is it clinically pertinent to compare IRE to traditional radiotherapy since stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT) and intensity-modulated radiotherapy (IMRT) are better tolerated and reported to give better results?

**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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