Reviewer’s report

Title: Targeted sequencing of circulating cell-free DNA in stage II-III resectable oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma patients

Version: 1 Date: 16 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer's report:

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

To view the full report from the academic peer reviewer, please see the attached file.

REVIEWER COMMENTS FROM REPORT:

The authors apply the protocols of ccf-DNA to study the applications of this technique to the follow-up of oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma patients after surgery. Although the cases studied are few, the paper can have some value as pilot study.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

In this view, the authors should specify how in 3 out of 18 cases there was not enough circulating tumor DNA: is that an expected rate? Were those the first samples studied before perfecting the technique?

The data are well presented and although not novel, the study presents solid results. The authors should clarify if the post-surgery quantitative data on DNA are expected, if they are dependent on the day after surgery the blood samples are taken and make a comment about a standardization of those times. No obvious correlation with the type of gene or mutation seem to emerge and the authors should be more clear about it.

As stated before, Justify the ccfDNA failure rate and the increase of the tumor DNA after surgery (if time-dependent or other explanation)

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

Few mistakes in the English language in the Discussion section (are lack, more optimal, etc..). The discussion is too long, can be cut in the parts referring to other neoplasms.
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.

No

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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