Reviewer’s report

Title: Necessity of prophylactic splenic hilum lymph node clearance for middle and upper third gastric cancer: a network meta-analysis

Version: 0 Date: 17 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Jose Pimiento

Reviewer's report:

The authors evaluate the question of level 10 or splenic hilum dissection and the impact on outcomes for proximal gastric cancer.

1. the manuscript is easy to follow, and the methodology seems clear. The title however is not. Maybe defining as level 10 or splenic hilum, as the No10 can be confused with meaning 10 LN resected

2. The discussion section is circular and I do not think the meta-analysis allows the authors for commenting much more than something is recommended or not. SO my recommendation is to cut more than half of the discussion and limit it to what the meta-analysis can support.

3. The statistical technique used are beyond my statistical understanding so this paper should be evaluated by a statistician.

4. The labels on figures and tables, are lost. So the figures are impossible to read

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.

Unable to assess

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

Unable to assess

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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