Reviewer’s report

Title: Diagnostic value of medical thoracoscopy in malignant pleural effusion

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Reviewer: Uffe Bødtger

Reviewer's report:

The study by Wang and colleagues presents the missing data from an earlier publication on the diagnostic yield of Medical Thoracoscopy (MT), see Wang et al: Efficacy and safety of diagnostic thoracoscopy in undiagnosed pleural effusions. Respiration 2015, 90(3):251-255. The present paper contains data from the 833 MT procedures performed at a single institution, focusing on the 342 with malignant pleural effusion (MPE). There seems to be no scientific hypothesis, and the paper is purely descriptive, and presents the reader with data on CT findings and outcome in the 342 MPE patients.

Comments:

1) There are some minor spelling errors here and there, eg page 7 line 7: "challenged" whereas some sentences are difficult to entirely understand such as the very last sentence in Conclusions.

2) Results sections is merely telling everything stated in Tables. Please choose either text or table, not both.

3) The "...and so on..." in the sentence "Among metastatic malignancies that resulted in MPE, the most common cancer was lung cancer (85.2%), followed by breast cancer (4.4%), ovarian cancer (2.2%), pancreatic cancer (1.8%), and so on." makes the reader feel that the author is very bored with his own work.

4) I really miss a hypothesis. The data are impressing by their number but as a scientific paper, the current manuscript provides too little of interest. I am curious: CT findings and association to malignancy in all 833 patients?

5) Materials: the description is too sparse. Please, provide the reader with sufficient data on your methods, so the reader can understand and perhaps replicate your study: timing of MT, prior workup, experience of operator, type of thoracoscope etc.
As the paper is known, it is an exciting draft and I am looking forward to reading a finished paper.

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

No

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

No

**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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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