Reviewer’s report

Title: Emphysematous change with scleroderma-associated interstitial lung disease: The potential contribution of vasculopathy?

Version: 1 Date: 26 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Andrea Gramegna

Reviewer's report:

To the authors:

This paper is a retrospective observational study on a small population of Scc-ILD coming from a single center. The study aimed to define this population according to three different dominions: clinical, radiological and pathological.

Major comments

1) The surgical lung biopsies were collected between 1997 and 2016. What about CT? This should be acknowledged as a limitation of the study and focus each aspects that may have changed since then in order to demonstrate the results not obsolete.

2) Were all diagnosis re-defined at the light of the latest criteria?

3) Page 6, lines 56-59. I cannot understand the meaning.

4) Page 9, line 1: it may be worth to say that there is no statistical difference between the two groups in term of smoking status

5) Page 9, line 20: reticulation? Try to use the same terms you gave definitions in methods

6) I cannot understand the meaning of the 'case descriptions' paragraph. Is this a sort of synopsis of results? I suggest not to repeat results in this paragraph and to include not-duplicated informations in the standard Result section.

7) I would appreciate a synthesis of the major findings at the very beginning of the Discussion section. It is useful for the reader to better understand the following discussion.

8) Page 12, line 10-20: if you have excluded cicatricial emphysema (as per methods), please remove that sentence

9) Your second major findings sounds a bit strong in comparison to your data. I would reformulate this paragraph (page 12) in a more dubitative / hypothetical tone.
10) Page 13, from line 1 to line 33. Consider to shorten it to a couple of sentences.

Minor comments

11) Page 8, 2nd line in Results: a parenthesis is missing.

12) Page 8, line 56: please specify the absolute number of pPE patients.

13) Page 9, line 17: almost all (?), please specify the numbers.

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.

Yes

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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