Reviewer’s report

Title: Beta-blockers for the primary prevention of anthracycline-induced cardiotoxicity: a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

Version: 1 Date: 26 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Tao Zhan

Reviewer's report:

Comment1

The authors kindly revised the manuscript accordingly. I am glad to see that the article has been improved both in terms of methodology and writing.

However, some data of endpoints were pooled in spite of the fact that there was essential heterogeneity among the included studies.

Comment2

I especially wouldn't suggest pooling the data from studies using different experimental agents unless the authors can provide very persuasive reasons, or illustrate urgent clinical demands in the article.

Comment3

Sensitivity analysis is indeed an effective way for testing the heterogeneity and the stability of results of data pooling, but it shouldn't be considered as a statistical approach to calibrate heterogeneity from different study design. A reasonable sensitivity analysis should exclude one study at a time and then re-conduct data pooling to see if there shows significant change after the exclusion. Even this process is only justified after discreetly making sure that the included studies are consistently designed.

Comment4

Included studies conducted by Liu, Elitok and Beheshti did not use placebo as the control intervention. These 3 studies simply used no additional preventive agents against potential cardiotoxicity. The authors are suggested to re-read the reports carefully to be sure about this issue.

Tao Zhan, MD
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.

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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