

Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS



January 5, 2015

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 15224-review.doc).

Title: Developing a lymph node ratio-based staging system for esophageal squamous cell carcinoma

Author: Shao-bin Chen, Hong-rui Weng, Geng Wang, Xiao-fang Zou, Di-tian Liu, Yu-ping Chen, Hao Zhang

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 15224

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer

(1) Reviewer: 58358

Comments to Authors:

This is a good paper which reports a large series of patients who underwent esophagectomy for SCC without neoadjuvant treatment. The data analysis appears sound and a good case is made for using the lymph node ratio to determine prognosis.

Response: Thank you very much for your favorable evaluation.

(2) Reviewer: 3017408

Comments to Authors:

It is a single institutional cohort study, but the selected cases are large and the analyses are appropriate. Minor comments: For lymph node count, not only surgical procedure, but also nodal retrieval is important, i.e. by surgeons, pathologist, or both. It should be included in the methods.

Response: Thank you very much for your comments. We quite agree with your suggestion. All operations were performed or closely supervised by two senior surgeons (Chen YP and Yang JS), and all resection specimens, including the lymph nodes, were assessed by two expert pathologists (Wu MY and Tian DP) in a standardized fashion. We have added this in the methods in our revised manuscript. Please see on Page 6.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,

Yu-ping Chen, MD

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