

## Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS

February 27, 2015

Dear Editor,



Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 15585-review.doc).

**Title:** Short-term and long-term risk factors in gastric cancer

**Author:** Giuseppe Verlato, Daniele Marrelli, Simone Accordini, Maria Bencivenga, Alberto Di Leo, Alberto Marchet, Roberto Petrioli, Giacomo Zoppini, Michele Muggeo, Franco Roviello, Giovanni de Manzoni

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 15885

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

**Review 02977382:** In the manuscript we used two different databases of gastric cancer patients. The first database, used to compare trends in mortality between cancer and diabetic patients, had been utilized to prepare an article of surgical quality indexes [Verlato et al, 2009], which had been submitted and published before the adoption of the UICC TNM classification 7<sup>th</sup> edition [Sobin, 2009]. Nonetheless, it had been rather easy to switch from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> edition as regards N status, which is simply based on the number of positive nodes. Anyway, to be more consistent according to the reviewer's observation, we coded back N status, according to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of UICC/AJCC TNM.

The second database, used to identify short- and long-term risk factors, is more recent so that "tumour invasion (pT) and lymph node status (pN) followed the UICC pathological tumour node metastasis (pTNM) criteria, 7th edition". We added this sentence to the description of this second series.

1. Sobin LH, Gospodarowicz MK, Wittekind CH, eds. International Union Against Cancer (UICC) TNM Classification of Malignant Tumors. 7th ed. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell; 2009.
2. 8 Verlato G, Roviello F, Marchet A, Giacomuzzi S, Marrelli D, Nitti D, de Manzoni G. Indexes of surgical quality in gastric cancer surgery: experience of an Italian network. *Ann Surg Oncol* 2009; 16(3):594-602

**Review 02537598:** We thoroughly checked language and grammar of the manuscript.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

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

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Giuseppe Verlato'.

Giuseppe Verlato, MD, PhD

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**FIRST REVIEWER:** The paper is a good one discussing prognosis in gastric cancer. Comparing with a cohort of type 2 diabetic patients, temporal trends in mortality were more obviously in gastric cancer. In gastric cancer patients mortality from recurrence peaked in the first two years after curative gastrectomy and then declined. Moreover, the prognostic significance of risk factors was not stable, as the effect of T and N decreased with time, while the effect of histology became apparent after two years. Older patients were associated with increased post-operative mortality. So the author suggested the possible solution was to split survival analysis in the first two years of follow-up and subsequent years. One question: in the paper, T status coded according to the UICC/AJCC TNM 6th edition (1997), meanwhile, N status coded according to 7th edition of UICC TNM classification (2010). Why? Can you correct them with the same standard ?

**Reply:** In the manuscript we used two different databases of gastric cancer patients. The first database, used to compare trends in mortality between cancer and diabetic patients, had been utilized to prepare an article of surgical quality indexes [Verlato et al, 2009], which had been submitted and published before the adoption of the UICC TNM classification 7<sup>th</sup> edition [Sobin, 2009]. Nonetheless, it had been rather easy to switch from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> edition as regards N status, which is simply based on the number of positive nodes. Anyway, to be more consistent according to the reviewer's observation, we coded back N status, according to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of UICC/AJCC TNM. The second database, used to identify short- and long-term risk factors, is more recent so that "tumour invasion (pT) and lymph node status (pN) followed the UICC pathological tumour node metastasis (pTNM) criteria, 7th edition". We added this sentence to the description of this second series.

17. Sobin LH, Gospodarowicz MK, Wittekind CH, eds. International Union Against Cancer (UICC) TNM Classification of Malignant Tumors. 7th ed. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell; 2009.

## **SECOND REVIEWER**

After reading I think that the manuscript is interesting and very deep in a problem of epidemiology and statistically description . I accept the aim, discussion and conclusions. Finally I have one recommendation: please read carefully your manuscript and remove the minimum linguistic and grammar errors.

**Reply:** We thoroughly checked language and grammar of the manuscript.