

Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS



September 27, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 4522-review.doc).

Title: TIPS improves liver-transplantation-free survival in cirrhosis with refractory ascites: an updated meta-analysis

Author: Ming Bai, Xing-Shun Qi, Zhi-Ping Yang, Man Yang, Guo-Hong Han, Dai-Ming Fan

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 4522

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers and the language has been edited by American Journal Expert (certificate verification key: 0A0F-1EF0-449B-42E8-109B).

1 Format has been updated.

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

- (1) **Comment:** In your study, you claim that it is impossible to collect individual patient data, like in the meta-analysis done by Salerno et al. Why is this impossible, when Salerno et al. managed to do so?

Answer: Thank you for your valuable comments. Collection of the individual patient data could offer more detailed data for a meta-analysis. In the present study, we did not intend to perform a meta-analysis of the individual patient data but to pool the time-dependent endpoints by considering the effects of both number of deaths and time to death. Therefore, we did not claim that it is impossible to collect individual patient data for us.

Most likely, the review referred to the following sentence in our manuscript: 'However, the impossibility of collecting individual patient data from all of the identified RCTs is a potential drawback for this meta-analysis'. We wrote this sentence to demonstrate one of the drawbacks of the study conducted by Salerno et al is the impossibility of collecting individual patient data from all of the included RCTs. We are sorry for the confusion caused by our unclear expression. And, we revised this sentence as following: 'However, the impossibility of collecting individual patient data from all of the identified RCTs is a potential drawback for the meta-analysis conducted by Salerno et al'. (Page 5, line 1-3)

(2) **Comment:** The supplementary table 2 is somewhat confusing and needs revision.

Answer: Thank you for your valuable advices. The supplementary table 2 has been revised according to your comments. And the title of this table were renamed Table 5 according to the editor's comments. We believe that the revised table is clear enough for the readers.

(3) **Comment:** P-values in Table 2?

Answer: Thank you for your valuable advices. Table 2 presented the characteristics of the patients included in the included studies. None of the studies has significant different patient characteristics between groups. Therefore, we added the following sentence in the footnote of Table 2: 'All of the comparisons between groups were not statistic significant ($P > 0.05$) in any of the included studies'.

3 According to the editor's advices, Figure 1 has been revised, and all of the supplementary Tables 1 and 2 were renamed Table 3 and Table 5, respectively. The relevant Table names were altered as well.

4 References and typesetting were corrected.

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

Sincerely yours,



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