



Florence, 8th March 2022

To the Editors of World Journal of Gastroenterology

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the comments of the Reviewers and the Editor about our manuscript entitled “**Evaluating the best treatment for multifocal hepatocellular carcinoma: a propensity score-matched analysis**”, manuscript number 75502). Your interest in this work is highly appreciated.

We are providing a point-by-point reply to the issues raised, as follows.

Reviewer#1

1. Please show the rationale for setting the cut-off value of AFP to 400 ng/mL.

R. A sentence was added in the Material and methods section to address the issue

2. Please evaluate the HCC stage also with the Up-to-7 criteria.

R. Evaluations according to the Up-to-7 criteria have been added in the Results and Discussion sections, in Figure 3, and in Table 3.

3. Please show the detailed breakdown of Child-Pugh score in Tables.

R. Tables were modified as suggested.

4. How did you judge whether liver cirrhosis be present or not?

R. A sentence was added in the Material and methods section to address the issue

5. You mentioned “In patients with multifocal HCC, considering similar post-procedural morbidity, LR confers longer DFS compared with TACE, but without differences in OS.”. As you know, drug therapy, including immunotherapy, is also the treatment option for multifocal HCC. How do you think about the proper use of drug therapy, LR or TACE for multifocal HCC? Please explain your opinion.

R. A sentence was added in the Discussion section to address the issue.

Reviewer#2

There were few patients included in this paper, which means that the statistics are more likely to show no difference between groups. Therefore, the title, abstract, Core tips and Conclusions should be modified to include wording that conveys the small study size.

R. The Abstract, Core tip and Conclusion sections have been rephrased to address the issue. We respectfully believe that the title of the paper should not be modified.

The introduction states that organ shortage for transplant 'cannot be overcome'. This wording is too strong

R. The sentence was rephrased as suggested.

Company editor-in-chief:

Uniform presentation should be used for figures showing the same or similar contents; for example, "Figure 1 Pathological changes of atrophic gastritis after treatment. A: ...; B: ...; C: ...; D: ...; E: ...; F: ...; G: ...".

R. Figures 3 to 6 have been re-edited as Figure 3A-E as suggested. Figure 3 caption has been rephrased, too. Figure 3B was added as required by Reviewer 1

Please provide decomposable Figures (in which all components are movable and editable), organize them into a single PowerPoint file.

R. A separate PPT file will be provided

Please authors are required to provide standard three-line tables...

R. Tables were re-edited according to the "Format for manuscript submission"

All the modifications have been highlighted in the text in yellow.
We hope that the revised manuscript is now acceptable for publication.

On the behalf of all Authors, with best regards,
Fabio Marra, M.D., Ph.D.

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