

Dear Editors,

Below you will find the response to our reviewers. Please see the accompanying supplementary material for page and line number.

BCLC intermediate stage disease that exceeds “the up to seven” criteria, especially with lesions larger than 5cm, is less likely to respond to TACE alone and is therefore a disease that may respond better to systemic therapy. With the recent breakthroughs in immunotherapy for advanced HCC which clearly demonstrated OS advantage over single agent TKI sorafenib, it is promising that the use of immunotherapy would likely lead to better outcome when used in intermediate disease.

Thanks for your comment..

Science editor:

This is an interesting paper which focused on the systemic therapy in intermediate stage hepatocellular carcinoma. The authors discussed the “up to seven” criteria and its utility in systemic therapy.

There are some comments for authors. The title may be more interesting if the authors added “up to seven criteria” in the title.

Please see the updated title.

The abstract and key words are not normative and the authors need to correct.

Please see the updated abstract and keywords which have been added from the MeSH database..

Some references need to be corrected and some references need to be added.

The references have been adjusted and the references suggested by the reviewer have been added.

Many details about systemic therapy need to be improved and discussion need to be more comprehensive. Other questions asked by reviewers need to be answered.

The discussion has been refined including the comments from the reviewers as outlined above. Additional more details have been added regarding the combination studies and previously negative trials. (See page 4, lines 35-45 and Page 5 Lines 1-15)

Thank you for your continued consideration.

Sincerely,
Dr. Tarik Silk