

1<sup>st</sup> of October 2016

Dear Ze-Mao Gong,

On behalf of my co-authors, we thank you very much for your help. We appreciate the editors and reviewers very much for their positive and constructive comments and suggestions on our article entitled "Repair of the common bile duct defect with a decellularized ureteral graft" (Manuscript NO: 28822). We have revised the article according to the reviewers' suggestions, and responded, point by point to, the comments as listed below.

With best regards,

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## **Reviewer 1**

### **Comments**

This is a novel and well designed experiment that provides a new approach to a complex and common surgical problem. The authors have provided excellent evidence that the acellular ureteral graft might be an adequate replacement for a damaged common bile duct. They also provide sufficient experimental evidence that such repair requires a stent.

### **Response**

Thank you very much for your comments. We tried our best to work on this topic.

## **Reviewer 2**

### **Comments**

The manuscript written by Cheng et al. describes a feasible procedure for common bile duct repair using a decellularized ureteral graft. The data are encouraging and provide a novel approach for reconstruction of common bile duct. There are some concerns that need to be addressed. Minor points 1. Long term results with the new method are unclear. 2. In humans, aren't there any problems for preparation of ureter?

### **Response**

Our experiment is subject to the following limitations. First, only eighteen pigs were included in the study due to limited grant funding. Second, all the animals were killed at 3 months post-surgery. Therefore, a further study is needed to evaluate long-term outcomes after removing the T-tube or intraluminal stent (e.g., 6 months, 12 months). This study is just an experimental study. Many aspects need to be studied and improved before a decellularized ureteral graft is used for the treatment of a common bile duct defect in humans.

In the end, thank you very much for the constructive comments and

suggestions on our article.