

## PEER-REVIEW REPORT

**Name of journal:** World Journal of Gastrointestinal Oncology

**Manuscript NO:** 47259

**Title:** prognostic and pathological impact of tumor budding in gastric cancer: A systematic review and meta-analysis

**Reviewer's code:** 02446277

**Reviewer's country:** Romania

**Science editor:** Ying Dou

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2019-06-04 07:26

**Reviewer performed review:** 2019-06-04 11:09

**Review time:** 3 Hours

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	LANGUAGE QUALITY	CONCLUSION	PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept	Peer-Review:
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language	(High priority)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	polishing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept	<input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of	(General priority)	Peer-reviewer's expertise on the
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not	language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision	topic of the manuscript:
publish	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> General
			<input type="checkbox"/> No expertise
			Conflicts-of-Interest:
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The study is certainly very useful as the topic is actual. The authors performed a meta-analysis and demonstrate that high-grade tumor budding is associated with tumor stage, tumor differentiation, lymphovascular invasion, lymph node metastasis and poor

survival for patients with GC. The only weak point of the analysis is that it does not put all data together but analyses them on published studies (I refer to figures). It would have been more useful if the evidence were "taken out of the study", put all together and then verified the association between tumor budding and tumor stage for example. However, since tumor budding has been officially recognized as an additional prognostic factor in colorectal cancers, this type of studies are very useful. Minor comments: 1. Dividing populations in high tumor budding and low tumor appears for the first time at the end in Discussion section (page 11). I think it should be stated from the beginning in the Methods. 2. Regarding fig 3: is a little confusing: tumor budding is positively correlated with tumor differentiation: may be to specify that the correlation is with undifferentiated tumors status (low differentiation degree) 3. Figure 4: Figure 4 does not contain subgroups stratified by patient number. Confusing paragraph: "The test for heterogeneity was no significant and used fixed-effects model ( $I^2=0\%$ ,  $P=0.483$ ) (Figure4). Furthermore, when the subgroups were stratified by patient number, the heterogeneities of the studies with  $> 200$  patients ( $I^2= 0.0\%$ ,  $P = 0.573$ ) (Figure4) and the studies with  $<200$  patients ( $I^2= 0.0\%$ ,  $P = 0.346$ ) (Figure4) were totally eliminated." If the heterogeneity was no significant why it was necessary to stratify patients in two subgroups? 4. Page 10 meaningless sentence: "Therefore, tumor budding and EMT also be related to GC." 5. Page 10 - check the English in the phrase: "In this meta-analysis, there was no significant between-study heterogeneity for most tests of the included studies,..." 6. Page 10: "undifferentiated patients" to be replaced with "undifferentiated tumor samples"

## INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

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7041 Koll Center Parkway, Suite  
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**Fax:** +1-925-223-8243  
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## PEER-REVIEW REPORT

**Name of journal:** World Journal of Gastrointestinal Oncology

**Manuscript NO:** 47259

**Title:** prognostic and pathological impact of tumor budding in gastric cancer: A systematic review and meta-analysis

**Reviewer's code:** 03769068

**Reviewer's country:** Brazil

**Science editor:** Ying Dou

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2019-06-04 18:21

**Reviewer performed review:** 2019-06-14 14:13

**Review time:** 9 Days and 19 Hours

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	LANGUAGE QUALITY	CONCLUSION	PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept	Peer-Review:
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			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No expertise
			Conflicts-of-Interest:
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is a relevant and current study. The methodological approach is well delineated, the discussion is dense and the conclusion is coherent. General and minor comments: 1) Work on the quality of the figures. 2) Review English.



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7041 Koll Center Parkway, Suite  
160, Pleasanton, CA 94566, USA  
**Telephone:** +1-925-223-8242  
**Fax:** +1-925-223-8243  
**E-mail:** bpgoffice@wjgnet.com  
**https://**www.wjgnet.com

## INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

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- ☐ No