

Dear editor,

I am very sorry that the statistical methods of this study have not been reviewed by a third party of medical statistics because of limited time. But we promise that we analyzed the data using appropriate statistical methods and the results are reliable. The data analysis was performed by Ming-Ming Qi and Peng-Zhan He, both of them are excellent in medical statistics. And we will try to finish the verification of the statistical analysis as soon as possible. Please contact me if further information is needed.

Your efforts in the review process of this manuscript are greatly appreciated.

Best regards!

Wei-Guo Dong

May, 15