



ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 14953

Title: Expression of circulating miR-20a and let-7a in esophageal squamous cell carcinoma

Reviewer's code: 00058460

Reviewer's country: Taiwan

Science editor: Ya-Juan Ma

Date sent for review: 2014-11-03 08:43

Date reviewed: 2014-12-16 12:57

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	PubMed Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
		BPG Search:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Expression of circulating miR-20a and let-7a in esophageal squamous cell carcinoma Commentary Research design Because of the high mortality in late stage, screening of esophageal cancer is essential. Therefore, the study of developing screening modality is essential. More importantly, miR-20a and Let-7a can be detected in circulatory system, and thereby they are promising candidates for non-invasive screening. However, we found some limitations or weaknesses in the study: 1. Novelty. MicroRNA, especially miR-20a and Let-7a have been widely studied. In addition to screening modalities of these microRNAs detection, we suggested to add mechanism studies to support the upregulation of miR-20a on cancer progression or tumor suppression properties of Let-7a in esophageal cancer. It is not clear why siRNA knockdown or ectopic expression were not used in Western blot experiments which would have provided the more convincing experiments to show the involvement of miR-20a and Let-7a in esophageal squamous cell carcinoma. 2. Low sensitivity In the present study, miR-20a was reported to have 55% of sensitivity. Sensitivity indicates the ability of screening to detect cancer in pre-clinical phase. Therefore, a candidate of screening modality should



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have high sensitivity. 3. Patient criteria Criteria for exclusion in this study should be mentioned. For example, the author didn't mention the treatment status of the patients that might affect the results. 4. Blinded study The author should mention if the samples from patients and controls were coded and studied blindly to prevent bias. 5. The study will be substantially strengthened if real-time PCR analysis could be performed to demonstrate the increased miR-20a and Let-7a transcripts in esophageal squamous tumor samples. Introduction The authors have clarified the background and significance of the study very clearly. However, there is still lack of supporting evidence regarding the mechanisms of miR-20a and Let-7a in cancer progression. Results Table 1 is well presented. It supports the hypothesis very clearly with statistical significance. However, the author should propose the threshold level to define miR-20a up-regulation and Let-7a down-regulation. The comparison of medians in table 2 shows insignificant difference. Please try to compare means of fold changes to see the differences between parameters. In addition, some grammatical errors are present in the manuscript. Please consider the grammars and make sure everything is correctly written. In addition, some incomplete sentences are still found (please refer to highlighted sentences in the manuscript). Overall, the study is well-designed to develop non-invasive screening modality. Major revision for additional data to support mechanisms of miR-20a and Let-7a in esophageal cancer biology is highly appreciated.



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ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
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		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

You should further expend the samples of ESCC patients to validate the specificity and sensitivity of the diagnostic value of miR-20a and let-7a in ESCC.



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ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

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CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Comments to authors -I should retitile "Expresión of circulating microRNA-20a and let-7a in esophagela squamous cell carcinoma"; it is more comprehensible. -The interpretation of your own results in Discussion is scarce: you could write something about the reproductibility of the laboratory tests, about the limitation of the comparison with healthy people instead of a control group, about the fact that-let-7a is decreased when tumor but is lower in advanced stages, about some aspects (clinic practice, treatment) in which your results could be useful in future. -Be careful with spaces in the writing.