



**PEER-REVIEW REPORT**

**Name of journal:** World Journal of Gastroenterology

**Manuscript NO:** 33617

**Title:** The prognostic significance of pretreatment serum carcinoembryonic antigen(CEA) levels in Gastric Cancer with pathological lymph node-negative(pN0)

**Reviewer's code:** 02549032

**Reviewer's country:** Greece

**Science editor:** Ze-Mao Gong

**Date sent for review:** 2017-02-22

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**Review time:** 7 Days

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	Google 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"/> 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 type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor		<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		BPG Search:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input type="checkbox"/> No	

**COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

This is a retrospective study on the prognostic value of pretreatment CEA in gastric cancer (GC) pN0. The authors concluded that CEA more than 30ng/ml is a worse prognostic factor for GC pN0. 1. However the statistical analyses should be controlled by a statistician. The authors compared two CEA groups: high-CEA 421 patients-v/s low CEA 48 patients. Is this difference enough for safe statistical analyses 421v/s 48? (did the patients performed power calculation for safe results? It seems that the 48 patients group is too small in comparison to 421 patients group. 2. Did all patients receive similar post-op treatment? Eg How many of them received adjuvant radiochemotherapy? 3. According to table 1. There was statistical significant difference in T1a between two groups. (in Low CEA group more patients were T1a in comparison to high CEA group. So the worse outcome could be attributed to worse T staging. So high CEA levels is a



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predictor to worse T stage? 4. In the discussion last sentence the authors reported subgroup T1N3. However, the protocol include only pNo patients. Please clarify what the meaning of this last sentence. 5. Figure 1 is not well understood. Please clarify better.



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**Title:** The prognostic significance of pretreatment serum carcinoembryonic antigen(CEA) levels in Gastric Cancer with pathological lymph node-negative(pN0)

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**Reviewer's country:** Italy

**Science editor:** Ze-Mao Gong

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CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	Google Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input 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
<input checked="" 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
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor		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

In the present paper, entitled "The prognostic significance of pretreatment serum carcinoembryonic antigen(CEA) levels in Gastric Cancer with pathological lymph node-negative(pN0)", Xiao et al retrospectively evaluated pre-treatment CEA levels in patients with pN0 gastric cancer (GC). They showed that subjects with CEA > 30 have a poor prognosis in terms of survival, vascular invasion and transmural invasion. The paper is easy to read and statistical methods are appropriate, however some criticisms may be moved: 1) There are several typos, which should be corrected. 2) Since this study was retrospectively planned, Authors should make it explicit in the title. Furthermore, limitations of the retrospective approach should be discussed more in depth in the "Discussion" section. 3) The X-tile plot has been recently elaborated to establish cut-offs for biomarkers in cancer (see Camp RL et al, Clin Cancer Res 2004).



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Therefore Authors should provide more detail about this test in the appropriate section of the article, and add the reference as well. 4) Data about Lauren classification of GC is lacking. 5) It is unclear whether GC of the cardia were included. Indeed, it is known that this subtype of GC has a different pathogenesis and singular natural history. Please clarify this point. 6) Authors should report how many GC have been excluded from the initial pool of cases due to inclusion/exclusion criteria. A figure with a flowchart may be useful.