

Response to reviewer 1:

The authors present a meta-analysis of several retrospective studies that connect increased pretreatment SFC levels to prognosis in lung cancer patients. The article is well written and presented well. The authors have identified the limitations of the study (mainly retrospective data) well. Overall SFC appears to be a non-specific marker that is elevated in many malignancies and in other conditions as well. Further studies are needed to exactly delineate the role of SFC in these conditions.

Answer: Thanks for reviewer 1.

Response to reviewer 2:

Question 1: Thank you for giving ... Thus, it is very interesting the meta-analysis proposed by the authors. But, it is difficult to understand the meaning of the subgroup analysis based on the country (China vs non-China) they performed. The manuscript is written well enough, and the English language should be verified just only for minor spelling and grammar mistakes.

Answer: Thanks for the reviewer's comments. In our meta-analysis we performed the subgroup analysis based on the country (China vs non-China), because more than half of included studies were from China and published on non-English journals. We deemed that this might cause an impact on the prognostic value of pretreatment SFC in lung cancer. Thus, we conducted this subgroup analysis to further identify the predictive role of pretreatment SFC and the results showed that pretreatment was also associated with OS of Chinese patients. Furthermore, we have carefully revised the manuscript and corrected these grammar mistakes.

Response to reviewer 3:

Answer 1: I have a few comments which I think will improve the paper. Quality assessment section 'Besides, the literature search, selection, data extraction and quality assessment were all conducted by two authors independently and any disagreement was resolved by team discussion.' Disagreements about whether a study should be included or quality assessment can generally be resolved by discussion. Often the cause of disagreement is a simple oversight on the part of one of the review authors. However, I wonder how the authors will solve the disagreement due to a difference in interpretation (this may require arbitration by another person) since there is only two authors in this systematic review.

Answer 1: Dear reviewer, thanks for your valuable comment. Actually, we solve the disagreement by contacting the biostatistics supervisor, Prof. Dong Tu who is from the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, 920Hospital of Joint Logistics Support Force of People's Liberation Army of China, as mentioned in the file "Biostatistics Review Certificate". In the last article Prof. Dong Tu published in WJCC as the corresponding author, I am the first author (Yang Gao, Xiaodi Luo, Xiaoli Yang, Dong Tu. Clinical significance of breast cancer susceptibility gene 1 expression in resected non-small cell lung cancer: A meta-analysis. World J Clin Cases. 2021 Oct 26;9(30):9090-9100. doi: 10.12998/wjcc.v9.i30.9090). Therefore, Prof. Dong Tu could give us valuable advice and help us solve the disagreement.

Question 2: You should provide detail about the NOS scale and cite the references. You can improve Table 1 by adding the detailed score of each section (Selection, Comparability, Exposure/outcomes) to make it more transparent.

Answer 2: The details about the NOS scale have been added in the methods part (page 4, line 14-18) and the reference for NOS scale has been cited. Meanwhile, the detailed scores of each section have been added in table 1.

Question 3: Results: Something is missing in Figure 1. A total of 978 records were identified through database searching. However, there are still 181 records in the selection process after excluding 797 duplicate records.

Answer 3: Sorry for the confusing expression. Actually, 181 duplicated records were removed and remaining 797 records were then reviewed. We have modified the figure 1.

Response to editor:

Abbreviations: All the text has been checked and modified.

Figures: Figures in the PPT have been uploaded.

Tables: All the tables have been modified.