

Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS

Feb 28, 2019



Dear Editor:

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 46062 revised highlighted.doc).

Title: Appropriate number of biliary biopsies and ERCP sessions for diagnosing biliary tract cancer

Author: Tadayuki Takagi, Mitsuru Sugimoto, Rei Suzuki, Naoki Konno, Hiroyuki Asama, Yuki Sato, Hiroki Irie, Ko Watanabe, Jun Nakamura, Hitomi Kikuchi, Yuichi Waragai, Mika Takasumi, Minami Hashimoto, Yuko Hashimoto, Takuto Hikichi, and Hiromasa Ohira

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy*

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The manuscript has been improved according to the reviewers' suggestions:

1 The format has been updated.

2 Revisions have been made according to the reviewers' suggestions.

Reviewer 1: Dear Authors, the article "appropriate number of biliary biopsies and ERCP sessions for diagnosing biliary tract cancer", by Tadayuki Takagi et al, is a retrospective study trying to clarify the exact number of biopsies and ERCP sessions required for the diagnosis of biliary tract cancer. As honestly recognized in the text, the retrospective nature of the study, the low sample size and the absence of indications regarding the volumes of the specimens sampled by biliary biopsies are important limitations to the predictive power of the study. The only conclusion that can be drawn is the fact that ERCP should be performed only once, and followed by other more accurate diagnostic modalities. With this limitation in mind, the study can be useful to give an indication to specialists involved in the diagnosis of biliary tract cancer. It is well written in English language and does not require language revision.

Response: Thank you for your valuable comment. We visually confirmed the collection of sufficient specimens (Lines 137-139). However, the point you raised is a definite limitation. We added the point to the limitations section (Lines 254-256).

Reviewer 2: The authors clarified that for the diagnosis of bile duct cancer only one ERCP is recommended if there is no conclusion though the brush cytology or biopsy. The finding is informative. There are few minor concerns in your article.

Comment 1: First, did you use SpyGlass choledochoscope in your series? If yes, you did not mention that in the method since there is one patient in N-group underwent choledochoscopy. If not, why you put it in your discussion?

Response: Thank you for your comment. We used a SpyGlass DS. The Materials and Methods section has been revised (Lines 154-155).

Comment 2: Second, is there any statistical bias in your conclusion because of small sample size (table 2)?

Response: Thank you for your valuable comment. We agree. A description has been added to the limitations section (Line 253).

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely,
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