



Comment on “The Significance of Long Non-coding RNA HULC in Predicting Prognosis and Metastasis of Cancers: a Meta-Analysis”

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Dear editor,

With great interest, we read the article “The Significance of Long Non-coding RNA HULC in Predicting Prognosis and Metastasis of Cancers: a Meta-Analysis” [1]. The authors stated that the lncRNA HULC could serve as a new molecular marker for cancer prognosis and metastasis. The results of the meta-analysis are encouraging. Nevertheless, there are still some shortcomings that need to be addressed.

After reading this article carefully, we think several points need to be corrected. Subgroup analysis of digestive system cancers and non-digestive system cancers was carried out to verify the significance of lncRNA HULC further. We find the data in Fig. 2a is not consistent with that in Table 2 [1]. Therefore, we searched for the relevant literature included in this paper and conducted a meta-analysis using Stata 12.0 software. The results were consistent with Fig. 2a [1]. We believe

that Table 2 has made a mistake [1]. The revised chart is shown in Table 1. We hope that the author can check the data carefully and correct them.

Besides, the authors calculated the merged HR of OS of metastatic cancer, indicating that lncRNA HULC can predict cancer metastasis. We don't think the evidence is clear enough. We read all the literature included in the article, most of which can extract data on lymph nodes and distant metastasis. We believe that the authors can calculate the odd ratios of lymph node metastasis and distant metastasis based on the data in this paper, which will strongly prove the correlation between lncRNA HULC and cancer metastasis.

Nevertheless, we are grateful to the authors for their efforts in studying the association between lncRNA HULC and cancer prognosis.

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Table 1 Meta-analysis results of subgroups in the OS group

Subgroup	No. of	HR (95%CI)	P value	Model	Heterogeneity	
					I ² (%)	P
OS	11	1.89 (1.32–2.47)	0.000	Fixed	0%	0.912
Cancer types						
Digestive system cancers	5	2.09(0.81–3.37)	0.001	Fixed	0%	0.956
Non-digestive system cancers	6	1.84 (1.20–2.49)	0.000	Fixed	0%	0.565
Sample sizes						
≥ 100	3	1.60 (0.86–2.34)	0.000	Fixed	0%	0.377
<100	8	2.33 (1.42–3.23)	0.000	Fixed	0%	0.990

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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Reference

1. Ding Y, Sun C, Li J, Hu L, Li M, Liu J, Pu L, Xiong S (2019) The significance of long non-coding RNA HULC in predicting prognosis and metastasis of cancers: a meta-analysis. *Pathol Oncol Res* 25: 311–318