## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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# Letter to the Editor Regarding the Article "Long Non-Coding RNA SPRY4-IT1 Can Predict Poor Prognosis in Digestive System Malignancies: a Meta-Analysis"

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Dear editor,

With great interest, we read Sun et al.'s paper entitled "Long Non-Coding RNA SPRY4-IT1 Can Predict Poor Prognosis in Digestive System Malignancies: a Meta-Analysis" [1]. The authors stated that the overexpression of SPRY4-IT1 was associated with poor over survival, suggesting that SPRY4-IT1 may be a predictor of poor prognosis for the malignant digestive tumors.

After reviewing the article, we found several errors that should be double checked and be corrected. Firstly, the overall survival HR was 1.24 (95%CI, 0.49–1.98, $p < 0.01$). The author showed that overexpression SPRY4-IT1 was associated with poor overall survival. However, it was an error result that the $p$ value couldn't less than 0.05, if the 95%CI confidence overlapping 1 [2, 3]. In addition, we reviewed all included studies by Sun et al..., we found that a set of data (Peng 2015) was wrongly extracted. Peng et al's HR was 0.82 (95%CI, 0.31–1.57), and the HR about SPRY4-IT1 expression was low vs. high in Table 1 [4]. Raw data should be processed, scilicet, after converting the SPRY4-IT1 high

**Table 1** Univariate and multivariate analyses of prognostic variables of overall survival and disease-free survival in GC patients (Reference Peng et al.) [4]

| Variables | Univariate analysis | | | Multivariate analysis | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HR | 95% CI | $P$ value | HR | 95% CI | $P$ value |
| Overall survival | 1.254 | 0.818–2.026 | 0.248 | | | |
| Age (<60 vs. ≥60) | 1.457 | 1.203–1.804 | 0.521 | | | |
| Gender (male vs. female) | 1.492 | 0.796–2.726 | 0.104 | | | |
| Location (distal, middle vs. proximal) | 1.633 | 0.980–2.837 | 0.546 | | | |
| Tumor size (<5 vs. ≥5) | 2.699 | 2.113–3.682 | 0.019* | 1.036 | 0.383–2.240 | 0.141 |
| Histological differentiation (well, moderate vs. poor, undifferentiated) | 3.583 | 2.438–5.605 | 0.943 | | | |
| Invasion depth (T1, T2, T3, T4) | 1.833 | 0.724–5.413 | 0.038* | 1.505 | 0.396–5.085 | 0.052 |
| Lymph node invasion (absents vs. present) | 2.294 | 1.061–4.545 | 0.427 | | | |
| Distant metastasis (absents vs. present) | 2.216 | 0.975–4.545 | 0.013* | 2.012 | 0.771–4.341 | 0.028* |
| TNM stage (I, II vs. III, IV) | 1.391 | 0.483–2.127 | 0.006* | 1.142 | 0.725–1.878 | 0.047* |
| **SPRY4-IT1 expression (low vs. high)** | 1.247 | 1.473–1.996 | 0.002* | **0.818** | **0.314–1.567** | **0.013*** |

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expression vs. low expression, and the HR can be used. Based on above errors, especially the *p* value was directly determining the significance of outcome, we suggest the authors re-check the data and make corrections.

Nevertheless, we still appreciate the authors efforts in studying the correlation between SPRY4-IT1 and malignant digestive tumors.

## References

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