

# Chinese whispers citations

Cuneyt Kayaalp

Editor-in-Chief

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I read with interest the paper entitled "Gastrointestinal Perforation and Fistula Formation in 5 Patients With Colorectal Cancer During Treatment with Regorafenib" published in *Clinical Colorectal Cancer* in June 2017 (1). I have carefully studied such article because I have experienced a similar phenomenon. I checked the rates of intestinal perforation and fistula associated with regorafenib usage reported in the article according to the references. The data of three phase III trials cited in the article were verified from the original references. But, there were discrepancies between the original data and cited data. For example, in the relevant study (1), it was said that fistula development associated with regorafenib usage in four patients had been reported in CORRECT trial published in *Lancet* in 2013 (Introduction section, line 23) (1). However, I could not find such an information in the original CORRECT trial (2). Also, they reported that gastrointestinal perforation in one case was seen in CONCUR Study published in *Lancet Oncology* in 2015 (Introduction section, line 26) (1). But, when I look the original CONCUR Study, I found that there were two more fistulas (rectal and vaginal) (3). Finally, they declared that gastrointestinal perforation developed in 2 of 188 patients (1.1%) in the phase III GRID trial published in *Lancet* in 2013 (Introduction section, line 29) (1). Similarly, I also surprised because there were 133 patients used regorafenib and no gastrointestinal perforation was seen in GRID Trial (4).

I thought that these discrepancies might due to a previously published review by Ray et al (5), authors possibly shared the rates according to this review. Ray et al. (5) reported that fatal gastrointestinal perforation was seen in 2.1 % (4/188) of regorafenib-treated patients in the GRID study. There was also an incorrect report probably because original reference had not been checked and ratios had been copied and pasted. As a matter of fact, there are not 188 patients in GRID Trial.

I believe that citations should be performed after controlling the original references. We wrote these problems to the journal but they refused to publish them.

Regards,

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Corresponding Author: Cuneyt Kayaalp, Inonu University School of Medicine Institute for Liver Transplantation, Malatya, Turkey

E-mail: cuneytkayaalp@hotmail.com