




	Risk of Bias				Applicability Concerns		
	Patient Selection	Index Test	Reference Standard	Flow and Timing	Patient Selection	Index Test	Reference Standard
Chen 2007	?	+	?	?	-	+	+
Chua 2009	+	+	?	?	+	+	+
Lin 2009	?	+	?	?	+	+	+
Lin 2012	-	+	?	?	+	+	+
Liu 2007	?	+	?	?	+	+	+
Ng 2009	?	+	?	?	+	+	+
Ng 2009	+	+	?	?	+	+	+
Tang 2013	+	+	?	?	+	+	+
Wang 2007	?	+	?	?	-	+	+
Zhang 2011	?	+	?	?	+	+	+

 High	 Unclear	 Low
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**Supplementary Figure S1**

**Supplementary Table S1. Quality assessment of the included studies using the signalling questions of QUADAS-II**

First author /year	Patient selection <sup>a</sup>			Index test <sup>b</sup>		Reference standard <sup>c</sup>		Flow and timing <sup>d</sup>		
	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	2-3	4
Chua/2009 [5]	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y
Ng/2009 [6]	N/U	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	Y/U	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y
Zhang/2011 [10]	U/U	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	Y/U	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y
Lin/2012 [8]	U/U	N/Y	U/U	Y/Y	Y/U	Y/Y	U/U	Y/U	N/N	Y/Y
Tang/2013 [9]	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y
Chen/2007 [3]	U/U	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	Y/U	N/N	Y/Y
Ng/2009 [7]	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y
Wang/2007 [11]	U/U	Y/Y	U/N	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y
Lin/2009 [12]	U/U	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	U/N	Y/Y	Y/Y
Liu/2007 [4]	U/U	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	U/U	Y/Y	N/N	Y/Y

Abbreviations: QUADAS-II: Quality Assessment tool for Diagnostic Accuracy Studies version-II; Y: Yes; N: No; U: Unclear.

<sup>a</sup> 1: was a consecutive/random sample of patients enrolled; 2: was a case-control design avoided; 3: did the study avoid inappropriate exclusions.

<sup>b</sup> 1: were the index test results blind to the results of the reference standard; 2: was it pre-specified if a threshold was used.

<sup>c</sup> 1: is the reference standard correctly classify the target condition; 2: were the reference standard results blind to the results of the index test.

<sup>d</sup> 1: was there an appropriate interval between index test and reference standard; 2-3: did all patients receive the same reference standard; 4: were all patients included in the analysis.

**Supplementary Table S2. Comparison of three meta-analyses of <sup>18</sup>F-FDG PET/CT for detecting distant metastasis in nasopharyngeal carcinoma**

First author /year	No. of patients	Subject	Latest study	Language of studies	All newly diagnosed	Any stages	Only bones metastasis	M0 in CWUs	Quality assessment	Compared to CWUs
Vellayappan/2014 [22]	385	PET/CT	2011	English & Chinese	Yes	No	No	Yes	QUADAS-I	No
Shen/2014 [21]	1798	PET/CT & PET alone <sup>a</sup>	2012	English & Chinese	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	QUADAS-I	No
Our study	1774	PET/CT	2013	English & Chinese	Yes	Yes	No	No	QUADAS-II	Yes

Abbreviations: <sup>18</sup>F-FDG: <sup>18</sup>F-fluorodeoxyglucose; PET: positron emission tomography; CT: computed tomography; M0: no distant metastasis; CWUs: conventional work-ups; QUADAS: Quality Assessment tool for Diagnostic Accuracy Studies.

<sup>a</sup> This meta-analysis reported pooled results of the subgroup of PET/CT which included patients with both newly diagnosed and recurrent disease.