Reviewer’s report

Title: Association of polymorphisms in survivin gene with the risk of hepatocellular carcinoma in Chinese han population: a case control study

Version: 2 Date: 25 May 2011

Reviewer: Thomas Wex

Reviewer’s report:

To the authors:
The authors have addressed most issues of the reviewers appropriately. However, there is still one shortcoming with respect to the scientific content, and even the authors have corrected several spelling errors, the manuscript still needs to be improved in this respect.

Major issue:
- While the authors shortened the discussion as proposed, it still contains statements about the regulation and carcinogenesis that is not supported by own data or discussed in context with other studies. At the end of paragraph 1 (discussion), the authors conclude that the stability of the survivin-mRNA is not altered (based on which data?). At the end of the discussion and in the conclusion, the authors highlight on “new direction” and the importance of the study to “understand molecular mechanism of HCC…”. These conclusions/statements are not supported by the descriptive study that showed basically negative results with one minor finding. Please revise these sections.

Minor issues:
- Figure 1 – 3 do not add significant information, omit them
- Correct last line in figure 6, is CC instead of GC
- There are numerous abbreviations used without explaining it at first use (e.g. IAPs, RING, CARD, BIR, EB, CRC, ESCC, CSLC, RFLP …); check the whole manuscript
- The SNP number should always contain the rs; correct in conclusions and abstract
- check for consistent type and size of letters throughout manuscript and tables “larger” instead of “lager”

Unclear meaning / grammar mistakes – please correct these parts

… molecular mechanisms alter in some biological signals …
The expression of survivin is in a cell cycle … ; rather use: Survivin is expressed
in a …
…, while a rapid decline in the G1 phase; while it rapidly declines …
… common mutation among cancer cell lines; it is in connection … ; rather
…mutation in cell lines leading to over expression …
Controls were frequency matched …; Controls were matched …
Figures and Tables are shown; not were shown as several times used in the manuscript
A locus is located; don’t use active form (locates, lies)

Consider:
… but no difference was found between the proportion of subjects who never smoked and current smokers.
… illustrating that our subjects presented the source population well.
… were included into models (not pulled)
… ESCC in Chinese population identifying the C allele on …
Yang also described different survivin expression levels …
… that rs8073069 G/C polymorphism was not linked to …
… at least one G allele on rs9904341 had a significantly …
… regarding the potential association of the survivin gene …

Please check carefully the complete manuscript

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.