Reviewer's report

Title: Haploinsufficiency for BRCA1 is associated with normal levels of DNA nucleotide excision repair in breast tissue and blood lymphocytes

Version: 3 Date: 27 April 2005

Reviewer: Alex sgambato

Reviewer's report:

General
In this manuscript the nucleotide excision repair (NER) activity is evaluated in normal blood cells and breast tissue from a breast cancer patient carrying a BRCA1 mutation. The results obtained demonstrate that BRCA1 haploinsufficiency does not affect NER activity in these tissues.

The technical aspects of the report are fine.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The Authors should focus on what is the subject of the study, i.e. the relationship between BRCA1 and NER activity.

To this aim, it appears not relevant the fact that the patient was identified by low power MRI, whose value the Authors demonstrates in another submitted publication (ref. # 3). While agreeing that MRI might be appropriate for use in community hospital and that its use might impact upon the medical system, it is difficult to believe that, as stated, tumors detected by this technology have unique etiologies.

Thus, I would suggest to reduce the indication to MRI, especially in the abstract background and conclusions.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The following sentence, in the Live-cell analysis of tissue explant cultures paragraph, appears not clear:
In the context of breast reduction epithelium (BRE) tissue samples from 22 patients with no breast disease, these patient samples manifested typical mixtures of fibroblastic and epithelial cells

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Most of the information reported such as Risk profile, Imaging, Final Pathology, treatment plan ad outcome are irrelevant for this study and can be eliminated.
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests