Reviewer's report

Title: No association between polymorphisms in the brain-derived neurotrophic factor gene and age at onset in Huntington disease

Version: 2 Date: 17 September 2006

Reviewer: Russell Snell

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a succinctly written report refuting a previously undertaken association study between the effect of BDNF polymorphisms and Huntington age at onset. The study is relevant and appropriately conducted. I suspect for the sake of brevity the authors have not included some detail that I would have found useful. In the methods section why was the onset of motor symptoms as the study age at onset?
The authors raise the possibility of population admixture contributing to the original discovery or their lack of replication. I think it would be useful to have the various allele frequencies quoted and a test for Hardy Weinberg equilibrium undertaken. This is particularly important in HD as there are few primary mutations/premutations evident because there is linkage disequilibrium in the HD population. Allele frequencies will allow other investigators to compare their data.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Place a table of allele frequencies and undertake Hardy Weinberg analysis.

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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)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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:

No
No
No
No
No