Reviewer’s report

Title: No evidence for association between tau gene haplotypic variants and susceptibility to Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease

Version: 2 Date: 10 August 2007

Reviewer: Yong-Sun Kim

Reviewer’s report:

The authors investigated the effect of polymorphisms in tau protein gene (MAPT) on the risk of Creutzfeldt Jakob disease (CJD). They found no influence of any polymorphism or haplotype on the risk of CJD. Thus the authors concluded that MAPT polymorphisms might not influence the risk of CJD.

The data seemed to be solid, and the interpretation was sound. However, because the results are negative, this point should be considered to be published in this journal.

Furthermore, several points should be addressed:

1. Gene maps of the MAPT showing six polymorphisms had better be added in Fig. 1
2. In table 3 & 4, the genotype frequency of six polymorphisms should be added.
3. Table 3 & 4 and table 5 & 6 had better be combined.
4. The degree of linkage disequilibrium between six MAPT polymorphisms including PRNP codon 129 should be indicated in new table.
5. In table 1, the MM frequency of PRNP codon 129 in UK sCJD population (46%) was very similar with control population (45%). But, in previous studies (Palmer MS et al. Nature 1991, 352:340-342; Windl O et al. Hum Genet 1996, 98: 259-264), the MM frequencies of this polymorphism in UK sCJD were very high as 95.5% and 83%. This point should be comment in discussion.

What next?: Accept after minor essential 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, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.