Reviewer's report

Title: Association of smoking with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis risk and survival: a prospective study

Version: 1 Date: 5 November 2009

Reviewer: Christopher A Shaw

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes. The role of smoking as a potential risk factor (or neuroprotectant as in Parkinson’s disease) is an important question. The authors’ results have provided some insight into the basic question and suggest that there may be a sex-linked association.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
Yes.

3. Are the data sound?
Yes.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Generally. A somewhat more detailed discussion of the correlation with female smokers would be helpful. Also, the authors might consider at least a mention of the studies on Parkinson's disease which appear to show neuroprotection.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
No. It would be more informative to note that there is an association in females.

9. Is the writing acceptable.
Yes.
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I am the primary shareholder of Neurodyn Corp, Inc.