Reviewer's report

Title: MCM2, A Superior Marker For Premalignant Lesions of the Lung

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Reviewer: Elmar Endl

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Accept without revision

Reviewing of the manuscript by Bepler et al. now entitled "MCM2 - A promising marker for premalignant lesions of the lung" was done very well by the authors. The authors responded to every point raised by the referees and their arguments are justified. I would therefore recommend the manuscript for publication.

It may sound petty-minded, but I would appreciate one minor modification of the manuscript. On page 14 line 7 the authors try to explain why there is a difference in the expression of the Ki-67 and the MCM2 protein. The sentences "It is thus intriguing to speculate that Ki-67 may be predominantly expressed during G1, S, G2, or M phase", "If Ki-67 were present only in G1 phase ..." (p. 14, l. 9) and "Conversely, if Ki-67 were present only in G2 phase.." (p. 14, l. 11) are hard to understand. The Ki-67 protein is definitely present in S, G2 and M phase and during a certain time period during G1 and so is the MCM2 protein. Any differences in the expression of both proteins should therefore arise from a different schedule for up and down regulation during the G1 phase. I might have missed the point, but it may also be irritating for readers that are not so familiar with the topic. However I agree with the authors that staining for both proteins will provide more information about the current status of cells within the cell cycle not obtainable for one marker alone. I leave it to the editor to decide whether this modification is necessary and to correct any final version.

As a remark, there is a typing error in the references that were added during the review process. The first author of reference number 15 (P. 18, l. 15) is spelled Schluter not Schulter (Or more correct Schlueter, due to the Umlaut that is not displayed in PubMed).

Nevertheless, the revision resulted in a well rounded manuscript that adds a new topic that should be discussed within the community.
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**Competing interests:**

None declared.