Reviewer's report

**Title:** Synuclein Gamma Predicts Poor Clinical Outcome in Colon Cancer with Normal Levels of Carcinoembryonic Antigen

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 9 October 2009

**Reviewer:** John Mariadason

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Synuclein gamma predicts poor clinical outcome in colon cancer with normal levels of CEA. Liu et al, BMC Cancer.

In this study Liu et al build on their previous observation in breast cancer and demonstrate that Synuclein gamma, which is not expressed in normal colonic tissue, is expressed in a subset of colon tumors. These tumors relapse more quickly, and patients whose tumors show synuclein expression have a shorter overall survival. The independence of synuclein as a prognostic marker from stage and other markers makes this a potentially valuable clinical observation. The study is well written, well controlled and appropriate conclusions are drawn.

Minor Essential Revisions

For the most part the introduction and discussion lack description of the potential biological function of synuclein gamma. More detailed introduction and discussion of the biological role of this protein should be provided.

The quality of Figure 1 panel A should be improved. Particularly the normal crypts are difficult to visualize as the image is too bright.

**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 declare that I have no competing interests'