EPCs have been studied for a decade using a variety of techniques and methods, some of which are related to the use of a combination of surface markers. Tracking EPCs has been done by tagging bone marrow cells, and subsequently imaging designated areas seeking for tagged cells. In this study, Yu et.al. have chosen to use a tagging technique based on Dil staining. Injections of EPCs to the tail vein of mice bearing cirrhotic livers have led to the investigation of EPCs at these designated areas. The authors found that the normal microenvironment of cirrhotic livers, but not the cirrhotic areas themselves are colonized by EPCs. In addition the authors showed that various pro-angiogenic and antiangiogenic factors overexpressed in tumor tissue or cirrhotic tissue may affect the adjacent normal tissue. The authors concluded that proangiogenic factors expressed by tumor tissue resulted in homing and colonization of EPCs to normal tissue adjacent to the pathology tissue, and therefore EPCs contribute to angiogenesis in hepatocellular carcinoma associated with cirrhosis.

Although this is an interesting observation this study lacks substantial details. Major compulsory revisions are required:

1. The language should be improved drastically. There are several sentences that I do not understand what the authors are trying to say.
2. The study is based on superficial and subjective immunostaining observation. Clear immunohistochemical staining is quite hard to achieve, and definitely risky when it comes to drawing such striking conclusions as has been proposed in this study. I would suggest that the authors use additional technologies/methods to reinforce their results and conclusions.
3. Although the authors indicated that they have tested the incorporation of EPCs into neovessels, there is no assay which directly proves such incorporation, nor did the authors show any staining for microvessel density in adjacent non-tumor tissue in comparison to paired tumor tissue or control.

At this point, I feel that the study is still premature, and should be further expended prior to submitting it for publication.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests