Author's response to reviews

Title: Impact of PINCH expression on survival in colorectal cancer patients with or without adjuvant chemotherapy

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Dear Editor,

We would appreciate if you could consider the enclosed manuscript entitled “Impact of PINCH expression on survival in colorectal cancer patients with or without adjuvant chemotherapy” for publication in the BMC Cancer.

The study included 251 primary adenocarcinomas, 149 samples of adjacent normal mucosa, 57 samples of distant normal mucosa and 75 lymph node metastases were used for immunohistochemical staining. Stromal staining for PINCH increased from normal mucosa to primary tumour to metastasis. Strong staining in adjacent normal mucosa was related to worse survival independently of sex, age, tumour location, differentiation and stage (p=0.044, HR, 1.60, 95% CI, 1.01-2.52). PINCH staining at the invasive margin tended to be related to survival (p=0.051). In poorly differentiated tumours PINCH staining at the invasive margin was related to survival independently of sex, age and stage (p=0.013, HR, 1.90, 95% CI, 1.14-3.16), while in better differentiated tumours it was not. In patients with weak staining, adjuvant chemotherapy was related to survival (p=0.010, 0.013 and 0.013 in entire tumour area, invasive margin and inner tumour area, respectively), but not in patients with strong staining. However, in the multivariate analysis no such relationship was seen.

Conclusions: PINCH staining in normal adjacent mucosa was related to survival. Further, PINCH staining at the tumour invasive margin was related to survival in poorly differentiated tumours but not in better differentiated tumours, indicating that the impact of PINCH on prognosis was dependent on differentiation status.

Neither the submitted paper nor any similar paper has been or will be submitted
to, or published in any other primary scientific journal. The authors are aware of
and agree to the content of the paper and are listed as author on the paper.
We are willing to meet the cost of reproducing color illustrations.

Yours Sincerely,

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