Reviewer's report

Title: Y-box protein-1/p18 fragment identifies malignancies in patients with chronic liver disease

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Reviewer: Hiromitsu Nagata

Reviewer's report:

In this manuscript, authors reported the availability of YB-1/p18 measurement as a tumor marker in human plasma of patients with advanced cancerous diseases, using a novel immunoblot assay. They described that plasma YB-1/p18 could identify patients with malignancies, independent of liver dysfunction, acute inflammation or renal impairment. This is an interesting work with novel information that may be relevance in clinical medicine. However, I have some issues that need to be addressed by the authors:

1. As described by the authors, nuclear YB-1 overexpression is a common finding in a variety of solid tumors and has linked to tumor growth and survival of cancer patients. Furthermore, high YB-1 expression is an independent negative prognostic marker for many solid tumors. Do the authors have any information about the relationship between plasma YB-1/p18 and nuclear YB-1?

2. In this paper, the authors mention that YB-1/p18 was the best single marker to identify patients with other malignancies among our study population and proved superiority compared with AFP, CA19-9 or CEA. Is it statically significant? I guess that the c-statistic value above 0.8 is generally significant.

Minor revisions:

1. In Figure 3 I feel there is macroscopically a gap in the relative optical density (OD). For example, Pat#57’s OD in Figure 3B is equal to Pat#11’s one in Figure 3D?

2. In the Table 2, it seems that the authors have misprinted Pat#59’s CRP level.

3. Page 10, line 27: the authors refer to “(Fig.3D)”, in my opinion it should be “(Fig.3C)”.

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.