Reviewer’s report

Title: Prognostic relevance of mRNA levels of OPN splice variants in soft tissue sarcoma patients

Version: 1 Date: 23 January 2012

Reviewer: mariaserena benassi

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The Authors performed a study to validate the role of Osteopontin gene variants in a series of STS correlating mRNA expression with clinical outcome. A more accurate statistical analysis would be appropriate for an improved and clearer interpretation of results.

Major compulsory revisions

The Authors state that the expression of OPNa is higher in females than in males. They should report the mean/median mRNA values and the statistical difference between the 2 groups.

The authors should indicate the cut-off value for survival analysis in females and RT patients. In fact, only the cut-off (median values) for survival analysis in all population is reported in result section.

The discussion of the results must be improved in order to explain the impact of this research on STS clinical management.

Minor essential revisions

In the RESULT SECTION, paragraph “mRNA expression level and Disease survival”, there is confusion between Table 3 (Cox’s analysis) and FIG 1 (Kaplan Meier) where the captions are wrong or missing. Caption to Fig. 1 is that of Table 3. Caption to Fig. 1 is missing in the legends and Fig. 1a is not discussed in the
results.
Fig 1 and 2 should be switched around (in the results Fig. 2 is described before Fig. 1)

Fig. 1 supp. is a reduced copy of Fig. 2 (Box Plot)

The Authors should document which tumour staging system was used

Discretionary Revisions

- It would be interesting include a table with the mean/median mRNA values of the single variants in the different histotypes although the difference is not significant

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.