Reviewer's report

Title: Preoperative serum C-reactive protein: a prognostic marker in patients with upper urinary tract urothelial carcinoma

Version: 5 Date: 26 December 2012

Reviewer: Charles Rosser

Reviewer's report:

In this interesting article by Stein et al. entitled Preoperative serum C-reactive protein: a prognostic marker in patients with upper tract urothelial carcinoma describes that using a cutoff of 5 mg/L, CRP can be a prognostic marker. In fact 78.9% vs. 36.4% of MIBC vs. NMIBC had elevated CRP. Similarly, 26.8% vs. 4.5% of patients with nodal disease had elevated CRP as did 16.9% vs. 2.3% of patients with distant metastasis. Multivariant analysis demonstrated that CRP, age and presence of mets corresponded to independent prognostic factors. Overall this is a straightforward simple to follow well-written manuscript. Below is a point-by-point critique of the manuscript.

TITLE: No issues

ABSTRACT: No issues

INTRODUCTION: Nice introduction. It lays the groundwork for the study.

METHODS: Who performed the CRP analysis? Your clinical lab or an investigational lab? Can the authors comment on if patients received pre-op or post-op chemotherapy since this could effect survival. Also was a lymph node dissection performed? If so then how extensive?

RESULTS: No issues

DISCUSSION:

Nice discussion. So the authors are just confirming what Saito et al previously reported, correct? Thus your finding is not novel.

CRP can be effected by inflammatory of CVD---did any of your patients have these conditions? Could these conditions effect your results?

Please list limitations of your study in a paragraph prior to your conclusion paragraph.

CONCLUSION: No issues

REFERENCES: No issues

TABLE 1: Change 1 at time of renal surgery to 1 at time of surgery

The difference in age between the 2 cohorts approached significance.
FIGURE1: What is your median follow-up? Can you accurately report the KM to 12.5 years? How many subjects are available for analysis at 2.5, 5, 7.5, 10 and 12.5 years?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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