Reviewer's report

Title: IGF-1 Receptor and IGF Binding Protein-3 Might Predict Prognosis of Patients with Resectable Pancreatic Cancer

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Reviewer: Helmout Modjtahedi

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In this study, Hirakawa and colleagues investigated the expression pattern and prognostic significance of IGF-1 Receptor (IGF-1R) and IGFBP3 in 122 patients with curatively resected pancreatic cancer. The expression of IGF-1R and IGFBP3 was determined using immunohistochemistry and was found in 41% and 30% of the patients respectively. There found a statistically significant association between the expression of IGF-1R and prognosis and with the prognosis been poorer in the IGF-1R positive tumours compared to the IGF-1R negative tumours. While they did not find any significant association between the expression of IGFBP3 alone and patient prognosis, patients whose tumours were IGF-1R positive and IGFBP3 negative had the worst overall survival. They concluded that IGF-1R expression may play an important role in the progression of pancreatic cancer and that the determination IGF-1R and IGFBP3 status of the tumours could be useful prognostic indicators in patients with curatively resected pancreatic cancer. Overall, this is an interesting and important study. However, some sections of the manuscript could be checked and revised accordingly:

1) On page 8, result section under Survival heading:

Please check 6th and 7th line. "The prognosis of patients with IGF1R negative and IGFBP3 negative PDAC was significantly correlated with overall survival (p=0.218)". Please revise this sentence as p value is above 0.05 and therefore not statistically significant.

Please check p value on line 10 (i.e. p=0.0181) as the p value in Figure three and in Figure 3 legend for prognosis in IGF-1R patients with stage II tumours is shown as p=0.008.

2) On page 9, discussion section, last line:

Please check and correct the sentence "The IGF-1R positive/IGFBP3 negative subgroup was the group with the best prognosis". It should have been be with the worst prognosis!

3) Figure 3. Please check the two IGF-1 and IGFBP3 subgroups labelling on these two subgroup figures as both figures had identical labelling (i.e. IGF1R-ve/IGFBP+ve versus IGF1R+ve/IGFBP-ve).

4) Also please refer to your specific figures when discussing your results in the
discussion section