Author's response to reviews

Title: The potential prognostic value of connexin 26 and 46 expression in neoadjuvant-treated breast cancer

Authors:

Ivett Teleki (telekiivett@gmail.com)
Tibor Krenacs (krenacst@gmail.com)
Marcell A Szasz (szaszam@gmail.com)
Janina Kulka (janinakulka@gmail.com)
Barna Wichmann (wwbarna@yahoo.com)
Cornelia Leo (Cornelia.Leo@usz.ch)
Barbel Papassotiropoulos (baerbelmaria@hotmail.com)
Cosima Riemenschnitter (cosimari@hotmail.com)
Holger Moch (holger.moch@usz.ch)
Zsuzsanna Varga (zsuzsanna.varga@usz.ch)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Doctor Linn,

Many thanks for your most recent effort in relation to our manuscript by Teleki et al.…, which we have corrected according to your suggestions.

The title is modified as: “The potential prognostic value of connexin 26 and 46 expression in neoadjuvant-treated breast cancer”

We have indicated the lack of Bonferroni correction in the statistics section (page 11). Also, we considered the lack of significance both of PgR and Cx46 post-chemo in multivariate analysis, therefore, we declared this in the last sentence of the related paragraph (page 15) as „… none of these proved to be significant independent prognostic factors in multivariate Cox regression analysis”. In agreement with this we rewrote the conclusion as you suggested (page 19).

Trastuzumab dose was also consolidated into 250 mg/m².

Cx46 expression correlated with overall survival both pre- and post- chemo in the intermediate categories, which are the real critical groups, where support is mostly needed. This is in agreement with Fig1E, where Cx46 levels showed a tendency of increase upon therapy. Therefore, we still think that though further validation on larger patient cohort would be very useful, this positive correlation between prognosis and Cx46 expression is warrant at least a modest interpretation, as we intended, in the discussion and conclusion. In the sentence of the discussion (2nd paragraph, page 16), Our main results suggest that…” we changed „can” for „may”.

In the text we changed “Prognostic value” to “prognostic potential”.

We modified the conclusion to emphasize the limited patient number and further validation according to your recommendation:

“Though our data are limited by the small sample size, they are supportive of further study regarding the detection of Cx26 and Cx46 as potential prognostic factors that might refine the intermediate, therefore the most critical groups of currently used classification systems of pathological response to neoadjuvant chemotherapy in breast cancer.”

All new changes are underlined using dashed lines in the revised text.

Many thanks again!

We would greatly appreciate if you found our manuscript acceptable for publication in BMC Cancer.

Best regards:

Tibor Krenacs