Reviewer's report

Title: Decreased GATA5 mRNA expression associates with CpG island methylation and shortened recurrence-free survival in clear cell renal cell carcinoma

Version: 1 Date: 21 October 2013

Reviewer: Takao kamai

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Takao Kamai wrote:

Dear Dr Lars Dyrskjot and Ms Roselyn Remoto

This work demonstrates a relationship between GATA5 mRNA expression and clear cell renal cell carcinoma. The conclusions presented might be supported by qRT-PCR method described in the manuscript. However, the authors should address the following issues thoroughly.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Materials and Methods

1. The authors described that “Sampling, collection, processing, and histopathological examination of tissue samples were performed as described previously [12].” . However, in ref [12], it was not accurate how they obtained the tissues. The identity and origin of the normal control tissue is a critical factor. Therefore, it is vital to accurately describe the generation of normal tissue samples. What was the distance to the tumor lesion? If the normal control tissue was extracted in close proximity to the primary tumor lesion, did the authors account for epigenetic cancer field effects? Please include this information.

2. Why is the number of tissue samples between tumor and non-tumor tissues not equal? For example; some of kidney might be totally replaced by the tumor? Please include this information.

Results

3. The authors should describe the mean ±#S.D. of natural logarithms of relative expression (lnRQ) values of GATA5 mRNAs in tumor and non-tumor.

4. The authors did not describe the patient numbers above and below groups of the cut off value.

5. A prognostic factor identified by univariate Cox regression can, by definition, not be independent. The authors analyzed the data by bivariate statistical models. Why did the authors not examine the multivariate Cox regression analysis?

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.