Reviewer's report

Title: Prognostic implications of ezrin and phosphorylated ezrin expression in non-small cell lung cancer

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Reviewer: RB Roden

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript by Jin et al addresses the expression pattern of total ezrin protein and phosphorylation of two particular sites within ezrin Thr 567 and Tyr 353 in non-small cell lung cancer with respect to patient outcome, grade and stage. In general the manuscript is clearly written, with adequate statistical analysis and addresses an important topic given the potential role of abnormal ezrin signaling in cancer biology. The study is a useful contribution to the literature and is scientifically sound.

Minor Comments:

1. Page 2: The manuscript does not show that ezrin or p-ezrin play an important role in the progression of NSCLC. It shows only a correlation between these markers and progression. The claim is overblown.
4. Page 6. How are discrepancies between the two pathologists resolved?
5. Page 7. The authors need to demonstrate the specificity of the antibodies used in this study by Western blot. How does they know what they are staining? Are the antibodies monoclonal or polyclonal? What species?
6. How can percent total ezrin staining be lower than p-ezrin staining as the latter is a subset of the former? It makes no sense.
7. Were all the cases of NSCLC primary and untreated?
8. The discussion is rather dry, being a list of the literature relevant to ezrin in cancer. It would be helpful to synthesize the findings.
9. Please also discuss the known molecular alterations/mutations in NSCLC and how these might alter signaling including ezrin phosphorylation status.
10. The text and graphs in figure 3 are at insufficient resolution.
11. Micrographs shown have a bar to indicate size.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

No conflicts.