Reviewer's report

Title: Nucleostemin expression in invasive breast cancer

Version: 1  Date: 23 November 2013

Reviewer: Semir Vranic

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:

The authors explored nucleostemin, a novel stem cell marker, in a subset of breast cancer cases.

1. Did you run separately positive and negative controls for NS (apart from the positivity within the normal mammary epithelium)? It is not mentioned in Materials and Methods. How would you justify cytoplasmic expression of NS in tumor cells?

2. Why did you use a 10% threshold for NS positivity? It is not supported by any reference. What was the mean (or median) NS positivity in breast tumors? What happens with your results when the data are dichotomized according to the NS mean/median value?

3. How would you explain higher NS expression in ER+ and HER2+ breast tumors and correlation with p53 given that triple-negative breast carcinomas typically exhibit TP53 aberrations (followed by p53 expression)?

4. Did you have any special histotype among 220 breast cancers you studied? If so, did you notice different NS expression in these cases?

Minor essential revisions:

1. Proof-reading of the manuscript, preferably by a native English-speaking, is mandatory as some typo and grammatical errors are seen throughout the draft.

2. Some statements are not supported by the appropriate references (e.g. the sentence on NS as a marker of „stemness“).

3. Results section in the Abstract should begin with the classification of the tumors on the basis of ER, PR, and Her-2/neu.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.