Author's response to reviews

Title: Stromal, rather than epithelial cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) expression is associated with overall survival of breast cancer patients

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Enclosed please find the revised manuscript of our paper entitled “Stromal, rather than epithelial COX-2 expression is associated with overall survival of breast cancer patients”. The revised version has been prepared according to the comments of the reviewers.

We hope that now you will find our work suitable for publication in BMC Cancer.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara W. Chwirot
“Stromal rather than epithelial cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) expression is associated with overall survival of breast cancer patients”

Response to the comments of the reviewers

We thank the reviewers for all the valuable comments and suggestions. We agree with all their remarks and have changed the text accordingly.

Reviewer Ming Zhang

1. “Title and conclusion need to be revised to reflect more precisely the data of this manuscript”
   Both the title and the conclusion section has been changed to put greater emphasis on prognostic significance of the stroma COX-2 expression.

Reviewer Fatima Baltazar

Major compulsory revisions:

1. “Methods. The inclusion of sub-headings would help the reading of the text. Also, a table containing the different IHC conditions and materials would help to find this information in the manuscript”
   The sub-headings are now included in the Methods section and new Table 1 has been added according to the reviewer suggestion.

2. “Methods, page 7, line 158. Why do the authors say that strong staining is seen as “dark blue or black” since they have used DAB as chromogen (brown staining?)”
   The change of the colour of the DAB reaction product is due to a presence of the nickel ions. We have now added a new sentence (p.6 lines 127-128) to clarify the matter.

3. “Methods. The data of Table 1 are already results. Why it is not included in the Results section?”
   The Table in question has now changed to Table 2. The reviewer is correct – part of the content of Table 2 includes some of the results. We now refer to Table 2 in the Results section (p.9, line 202).
4. “Results. A figure with photos showing COX-2 staining with the different antibodies in both epithelial and stroma compartments should be included.”

New figure (Fig.1) has now been added presenting the COX-2 staining with all the three antibodies.

5. “Discussion. The role of COX-2 in both the tumour and stromal compartment should be discussed.”

A new paragraph has been added at the end of the Discussion section (pp.13-14, lines 319-335).

6. “The manuscript should be seen by an English expert”

The manuscript has been reviewed by a native speaker visiting our Institute and corrected in several places.

Minor essential revisions:

1. “Abstract. The second sentence of the results is a repetition of the Methods section.”

The sentence in question has been changed.