Reviewer's report

Title: Elevated preoperative peripheral blood monocyte count predicts poor prognosis for hepatocellular carcinoma after hepatic resection

Version: 1 Date: 20 May 2014

Reviewer: Megan McNally

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Major Compulsory Revisions
What additional value does the monocyte value have in prognosis over the other independent predictors of survival (tumor size, encapsulation, multiple tumors)? (i.e. all of that information should be known postoperatively as well) Would a high preop monocyte value perhaps lead to consideration of neoadjuvant therapies? Would following the monocyte count postoperatively aid in identifying recurrence earlier? Would failure of the monocyte count to resolve indicate indolent disease? Does the author have any plans to assess patients in the future on a prospective basis or in a clinical trial looking at adjuvant therapies? I feel these questions should be addressed in the discussion to emphasize the clinical importance of this information.

Minor Essential Revisions
There are some spacing issues between numbers and %iles and words and the citations throughout the text.

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 have no financial conflicts to disclose