Reviewer's report

Title: Protein p16INK4a as a marker of dysplastic and neoplastic alterations in cervical epithelial cells

Version: 1 Date: 10 May 2004

Reviewer: Shiro Nozawa

Reviewers report:

General
This paper is described regarding p 16 overexpression by immunohistochemistry in cervical neoplasia. They found that positive signal in mild, moderate, severe dysplasia, and invasive carcinoma was 37, 31, 66 and 94%, respectively. They concluded that p16 negative staining was not sufficient reason to exclude a patient from the high risk group.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. They found some of specimen was negative staining. Nevertheless they described that “In conclusion despite this application of immunohisto/cytochemical test for P16 may be regarded as a promising additional test for early diagnostics of cervical cancer.” The logic of this description was contradictory. As they mainly focused on the negative staining of specimen in discussion, final conclusion seemed to be inappropriate.
2. The positive ratio seems to be low in CIN compared with other reference (reference 9). What is the reason?

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1. It is not of value to be shown table 2 and 3. It is enough to describe in the text.
2. As for technical terms, should mild neoplasia be mild dysplasia?(page 2)
   Condilomas should be condyloma(page 7)
3. endometrial cells are usually found on vaginal smears and they do express the marker. (what does it mean?)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:

none