Reviewer's report

Title: HFE C282Y and H63D in Adults with Malignancies in a Community Medical Oncology Practice

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Reviewer: Seppo Parkkila

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General:
I like to thank you for an opportunity to review this interesting paper. Barton and colleagues have analyzed frequencies of HFE C282Y and H63D mutations in patients with hematologic or other malignancies. They conclude that HFE mutations may influence the risk of developing certain common malignancies. The major problem of the present study is the low number of patients within some categories. The counted ORs suggest some trends, but the differences are not statistically significant. Despite the low number of patients, the study is well designed and the conclusions are sound. I am sure that this paper will attract many other researchers on this field to analyze larger study populations.

Minor Compulsory Revisions:
1. The authors mention that "318 apparently healthy white persons from the general population were used as controls". In the results section, the controls include 148 men and 160 women that makes only 308 controls. I think that there has to be errors in some numbers.
2. Based on the results section, "24 patients had myeloid malignancies" (myelodysplasia, myeloproliferative disorders, or acute non-lymphoblastic leukemia). If I counted those patients in Table 1, I got a different number (23).
3. It is not appropriate to provide values of p or ORs when n<5 (eg. see Table 2).

Advice on publication: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:
None