Reviewer's report

Title: Cytokine and Immunoglobulin Production by PWM-stimulated Peripheral and Tumor-Infiltrating Lymphocytes of Undifferentiated Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma (NPC) Patients

Version: 1 Date: 16 July 2004

Reviewer: kwok wai LO

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors have characterized the cytokine and immunoglobulin production in NPC patients. They showed that IL-2, IL-10, IgM and IgG were highly produced in the TIL of NPC patients. However, it would be more interesting if more cytokines were studied in the samples. The major problem of the manuscript is the absence of EBV data in the NPC samples. Since EBV is believed to be important in the humoral and cellular immune responses in NPC, detection of latent EBV infection in the primary tumors of 17 NPC patients is necessary.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The presentation of the figures should be improved. The figures should be grouped together.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The EBV status in the tumor samples of 17 NPC patients should be determined. EBER in-situ hybridization should be performed. The correlation of cytokine/ immunoglobulin production with the EBV status should be investigated if both of EBV+ve and EBV-ve NPC are included in this study. The histological types (all undifferentiated NPC?) should be clearly mentioned in the manuscript.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
None