Reviewer's report

Title: Survivin expression and its clinical significance in pancreatic cancer

Version: 1 Date: 11 July 2005

Reviewer: Naoki N Watanabe

Reviewer's report:

General

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

1. Although these authors explained that no correlation was found between survivin expression and p53 protein expression in result section, they did not show any figure or table to show this result. It is very important point because Lu et al. found a correlation between accumulation of mutant p53 protein and survivin protein expression in gastric cancer tissues (Cancer Res 1998; 58: 1808-12.). In addition, Hoffman et al demonstrated that introduction of wild-type p53 gene into p53-null human lung cancer cells resulted in a significant decrease in expression of the survivin gene (J Biol Chem 2002; 277: 3247-57.). Therefore authors should discuss the discrepancy between their observation and results shown in these previous reports.

2. Authors explained that some authors suggest that survivin may be an independent prognostic marker not associated with p53 or Bax expression (Ref.20 and 21). However, in Ref. 20, Knutsen et al. showed that survivin positivity was related to p53 expression (p = 0.02) in rectal cancer.

3. Authors explained that no correlation between survivin expression and survival. This explanation was too strong. Because survivin-negative group tended to show higher survival rate than that in survivin-positive group by 50 months after operation.

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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)

1. In Table 2, although they examined 49 cases of pancreatic cancer, total numbers in lymphatic invasion, vein invasion and perineural invasion were 46.

2. Legend for figure 3 is missing.

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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: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No