Reviewer's report

Title: Identification of apoptosis promoting constituents of Ukrain

Version: 1 Date: 24 October 2005

Reviewer: Christina Voelkel-Johnson

Reviewer's report:

General
This study aims at 1) characterizing the apoptotic pathway induced by a molecule called "Ukrain" and 2) to further analyze the identity of "Ukrain" by mass spectometry.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
During identification of the apoptotic pathway induced by Ukrain, the authors found partial inhibition of apoptosis by Bcl-2 or a DN-caspase-9. Authors should determine whether the inhibition is statistically significant. Of interest would also be the effect of Bcl-xl or other anti-apoptotic members of the Bcl-2 family.

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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)
- typo in "mitochondria" page 5, first paragraph, line 13
- typo in "interestingly" page 13, paragraph 1, line 14

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
The observed apoptotic response is induced by chelidonine which is contained in Chelidonium majus extract and appears to be the major component of Ukrain. One concern is that the range in which apoptosis is induced is relatively narrow. The effect on normal cells would be useful in determining the therapeutic window of chelidonium.

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What next?: Accept after minor essential 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:
I declare that I have no competing interests