Reviewer's report

Title: Prognostic significance of composite expressions of MCM2, Ki-67 and gelsolin in non-small cell lung cancer

Version: 2 Date: 13 May 2006

Reviewer: Akiteru Goto

Reviewers report:

General
This manuscript entitled "Prognostic significance fo composite expressions of MCM2, Ki-67, and gelsolin in non-small cell lung cancer" by Jun Yang et al reported that higher levels of gelsolin were significantly associated with poorer survival in 128 NSCLC cases. Moreover, higher levels of gelsolin and MCM2 or ki-67, and higher levels of gelsolin, MCM2 and Ki-67, in composition, were ominous prognostic factors. Although some major revisions might be required, and the level of interest might not be outstanding, the manuscript is substantially acceptable for publication in "BMC Cancer", as the prognostic value of MCM2, a potentially important factor in proliferation of cancer cells, in NSCLC has not been fully assessed to date, and the combination of proliferation and motility markers is relatively unique in the prognostification of NSCLC cases.

As for the revisions, statements in Page 11, lines 4-20 and the style of Table 2 might require statistical review.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. Although the authors reported that "variable gelsolin expression" had been significantly associated with poor survival compared with "uniform gelsolin expression" in NSCLC cases in the previous report (Lung Cancer 2004;46: 29-42), the authors did not evaluate the uniformity of gelsolin expression in the manuscript. The authors should evaluate the uniformity of gelsolin expression, or explain the reason not to evaluate the uniformity.

2. Page 11 lines 4-20 There are several errors in interpreting the results of statistical analyses. (a) lines 11-12 High MCM2 was associated with squamous cell carcinoma, only, in comparison with adenocarcinoma, large cell carcinoma, and other types of tumors. (b) lines 12-13 High MCM2 was associated with poor differentiation in comparison with mod. differentiation.

The numbers of the percentage in Table 2 were those in the subgroups defined by expression status of MCM2, Ki-67, and gelsolon. It might be erroneous to present those percentages in the text in Page 11. Please confirm the correctness of the statements in Page 11, lines 4-20 and the style of Table 2 by consulting the statisticians.

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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)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.