Reviewer's report

Title: Qualitative and Quantitative Proteomic Analysis of Nipple Aspirate Fluid from Women with Early-Stage Breast Cancer using Isotope-coded Affinity Tags and Tandem Mass Spectrometry

Version: 2 Date: 22 January 2006

Reviewer: Richard Somiari

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper is important because breast cancer still imposes significant healthcare burden in women worldwide. Identification of biomarkers with sufficient sensitivity for early detection and accurate prognosis of breast cancer is highly desirable. The study by Pawlik et al., involved the use of Isotope-coded affinity tag (ICAT) tandem mass spectrometry (MS) to quantify and identify differentially expressed proteins in nipple aspirate fluid (NAF) from tumor-bearing and contralateral disease-free breasts of consenting female patients. A total of 353 peptides and 39 proteins were identified, out of which, the expression of one of the proteins, vitamin D-binding protein was examined by western analysis. The paper is noteworthy because; 1) the ICAT technology was used, 2) potentially important candidate biomarkers are described and 3) the sample analyzed, nipple aspirate fluid, is obtainable via a minimally invasive procedure.

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

None

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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)

None

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

None

What next?: Accept without revision

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