Reviewer's report

Title: Single nucleotide polymorphisms in the APC genes of Taiwanese subjects and colorectal cancer risk: a case-control study

Version: 2 Date: 19 December 2005

Reviewer: Mef Nilbert

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)

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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)

Chen et al. present a case-control study containing data on SNPs in the APC gene in relation to the risk of colorectal cancer. The manuscript is well-written in good English.

The authors identify 3 novel mutations and identify 4 suggestive high-risk genotypes. The difference in mutation spectrum supports the need to perform such studies for different populations in order to appreciate specific risks associated with possible changes identified.

The methods section needs to be clarified. Were family histories of cancer available? What were the tumor locations; i.e. the distribution of proximal and distal tumors? The section on sex and age distributions should be moved from the Results to the Materials section.

How was the size of the study sample determined? Was a power analysis performed?

All gene names should be italicized. Also, the international nomenclature should preferably be used for the labelling of the SNPs.

The last sentence could be omitted. It draws a very far-fetched conclusion.

The sequence figure could be omitted since it adds no new information.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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'