Reviewer's report

Title: Quantitative evaluation of RASSF1A methylation in the non-lesional, regenerative and neoplastic liver.

Version: 1 Date: 3 September 2005

Reviewer: Jingde Zhu

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting attempt to define the role of the hypermethylation of the RASSF1A and NORE1 genes in liver lesions including the hepatic nodule, cirrhosis, and hepatocellular carcinoma. However, a number of questions need to be addressed.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1, it is necessary for authors to explicitly state the frequency of changes in methylation of both RASSF1A and NORE1A genes in various settings.

2, a large number of studies have been published on the aberrant methylation state of the RASSFA1 gene promoter in many types of cancer, including liver cancers. It is necessary for author to compare the observed frequency of aberration in methylation with others, and state the possible reasons behind, such as the different regions subject to the investigation. It is necessary for the authors to provide the information on the region of this studies and discussion of the significance in the context of the published information.

3, The methylation status of the CpG in clinical sample should be put in the context of the sequence. The presentation in Fig. 3 is lacking the required clarity. It is necessary to include the real data (sequencing).

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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: Yes
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.