Reviewer's report

Title: HER-2, p53, p21 and hormonal receptors proteins expression as predictive factors of response and prognosis in locally advance breast cancer treated with neoadjuvant docetaxel plus epirubicin combination

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Reviewer: Sehwan Han

Reviewer's report:

General
The article analyzed not novel topic in breast cancer management albeit the conclusion was rather solid. Authors have to focus on the negative results of molecular predictive markers mentioned in the Discussion. Generally we can not get any unbiased solid conclusion from retrospective analysis. We can retrieve another hypothesis from the retrospective analysis of the data and this hypothesis generating role is a relevant one.

I recommend to revise the discussion and conclusion on the basis of negative results of predictive markers.

Additionally, I would like to recommend some points needed revision.

1. In the Discussion, the authors mentioned “HER2 expression is associated with resistance to anthracycline plus docetaxel.” The expression seems too conclusive because there are a lot of data to deal with the better clinical response to anthracycline of HER2-expressing tumors.

2. The authors emphasized the changes of p21 and p53 expression after neoadjuvant chemotherapy but not HER2. HER2 expression is a unique biologic features which is well maintained during breast cancer progression. Another biologic characteristics of HER2 is that majority of tumor have the same nature in HER2 expressing tumors. Thus, analysis about the change of HER2 expression is not needed nowadays.

3. Please omit or reduce the talk about p21 and p53 which is not important.

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

 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)