Reviewer's report

Title: Expression of the Na+/I- symporter (NIS) is markedly decreased or absent in gastric cancer and precancerous lesions

Version: 1 Date: 23 October 2006

Reviewer: Christine Spitzweg

Reviewer's report:

General
In the manuscript entitled “Expression of the Na+/I- symporter (NIS) is markedly decreased or absent in gastric cancer and precancerous lesions” Altorjay et al. report the investigation of the expression of the sodium iodide symporter (NIS) in normal and malignant gastrointestinal tissue samples including gastric tumors by immunohistochemical and immunoblot analysis. In the healthy gastrointestinal tract NIS expression was only detected in the gastric mucin-producing epithelial cells. Marked downregulation of NIS expression was observed in gastric tumors including the vicinity of the tumors with NIS expression becoming gradually stronger with increasing distance from the tumor. In addition, Barrett lesions from the oesophagus showed NIS-positivity only in the case of junctional and fundus-type columnar metaplasias, but not in the case of intestinal metaplasias. This is the first study systemically analyzing NIS expression in the gastrointestinal tract. Furthermore, the results are of major clinical significance underscoring the prognostic and diagnostic significance of the absence of NIS expression in the evaluation of gastric lesions as well as Barrett metaplasia.

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)
The only minor comment is that there is no reference to Figure 2 in the text, which should be added by the authors.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept without revision

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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