Reviewer's report

Title: Common NOD2/CARD15 variants are not associated with susceptibility or the clinicopathologic characteristics of sporadic colorectal cancer in Hungarian patients

Version: 1 Date: 29 November 2006

Reviewer: Carsten Büning

Reviewer's report:

General

Comments to the Authors:

The authors investigated the frequency of two common CARD15 variants in Hungarian patients with colorectal cancer and compared the frequency to healthy subjects. They detected no significant difference comparing these two groups indicating no association of the two CARD15 variants to CRC in their population. Within the patients with colorectal cancer, they did not observe a distinct clinical phenotype depending on the CARD15 status. The paper is well written, straight to the point, sample size are adequate. However, the idea is not novel, but since previous reports have come up with different results regarding CARD15 and CRC, it is important to replicate these interventions in different populations.

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

Major compulsory revisions:

1. The authors only investigated two of the three common CARD15 variants (SNP8, R702W was not investigated). Since the frequency of CRC patients carrying at least one mutant allele within SNP12 and 13 is higher compared to controls (10.8 vs. 8.5%), one cannot exclude that the frequency of the SNP8 variant could influence these data resulting at least in a trend towards an association of CARD15 to CRC. Other studies performed on this subject have also investigated all three common CARD15 variants. Thus the authors should provide a clear rationale for not investigating R702W within CARD15. Otherwise I would suggest to include genotyping for R702W within this paper.

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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)

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Two quotations on page 4 are missing:
   a. NOD2 is associated with reduced alpha-defensin secretion
   b. NOD2 is involved in the regulation of TLR2

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

None

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 importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests.

Carsten Büning