Reviewer's report

Title: Expression of CD80 and CD86 costimulatory molecules correlates with better survival in nasopharyngeal carcinoma

Version: 3 Date: 25 March 2007
Reviewer: S-H Ignatius Ou

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors have performed the recommended changes especially the multivariate analysis. The multivariate analysis indicated the CD80/86 expression given the samples size was not shown to be an independent prognostic factor.

For a tumor marker to be viewed as an independent prognostic factor should be determined after multivariate analysis not just univariate analysis. I understand that the sample size here is limited but the authors may in the future analyze more samples to achieve the statistical significance in a multivariate analysis.

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

1. Because of the CD80/86 expression was not shown to be an independent prognostic marker for overall survival, the title should be changed to "Expression of CD80 and CD86 costimulatory molecules are potential markers for better survival in nasopharyngeal carcinoma".  
2. The results section of the abstract should include a sentence to describe the results of the multivariate analysis. "...without it (p=0.017), but after adjustment for stage, nodal status, and treatment the expression of CD 80/86 did not significantly correlate with overall survival.
3. At the end first sentence in page 10 ".a favorable outcome in patients with NPC" should add "by univariate analysis".

After these 3 revisions, will accept the manuscript

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 whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests