Reviewer’s report

Title: p53 expression is significantly correlated with high risk of malignancy and epithelioid differentiation in gastrointestinal stromal tumors. An immunohistochemical study with 104 GISTs.

Version: 2 Date: 15 April 2008

Reviewer: Luigi Insabato

Reviewer’s report:

General comment

The authors in this study examined the expression of p53, bcl-2, and cyclin D1 and correlated the data with risk factors tumor size, mitotic rate, and proliferative activity, but also with cytological subtype, tumor site, occurrence of metastasis and overall survival in 104 GIST

Although authors showed some interesting data, there is also some dictation and grammatical error in the text.

Major points

1. Pag 5 immunohistochemistry parag. The authors sentenced :” Therefore, all cases in which the tumor cells showed a intense positive nuclear reactivity for p53 were considered positive (cut off 0%).” Beside some grammatical error, I understand that only one positive nucleus should be considered pathological, and this is correct, however to be reasonable one should consider that tumours showing at least 5% of positive nuclei were considered for statistical analysis, for example. This should be written in the text.

2. Pag 5 to clarify the number of patients with follow-up. Do the authors get FU in 47 patients? It would be better to clarify which patients died for disease

3. Pag 7 line 24 and line 25 “(3/16) of the GISTs with metastases (2 duodenal GISTs, 1 gastric GIST), but in 62% (8/13) of GISTs without metastases from various tumor sites” The number in bracket regarding GIST with and without metastasis is fairly confusing. The numbers should be the same reported in the material and methods and results paragraphs.

4. Photo 1 should be of better quality selecting a field with more nuclei positive

Minor points

Pag 2 last line epithlioid =epithelioid”

Pag 4 line 16 habe=have

Pag 4 material and methods paragraph, line 4 “it is a retrospective study” to
delete.

Pag 5 immuno parag, line 11 a=an

Pag 5 same parag, line 12 intensive=intensive

Pag 5 To specify the cut off of P53 bcl2 and cyclin D1

Pag 6 results parag, line 12 kiS5=ki67

Tab 1 the authors should add CD 34 antibody

Tab 1 KiS5=Ki67

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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