Reviewer's report

Title: Bioelectrical impedance phase angle as a prognostic indicator in breast cancer

Version: 1 Date: 6 March 2008

Reviewer: Robert J MacInnis

Reviewer's report:

A well-written report, and the research is of good standard, but there are a few revisions that I recommend.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The follow-up time is a little unclear - was there a cutoff date for all participants followed? Were there any persons lost to follow-up? If so, do they differ in characteristics?
2. Were there men in the analysis? If so, how many? Were sex-specific analyses performed? Such analyses would need to be reported.
3. Were tests performed to check whether proportional hazard assumptions were violated for any of the measures? If so, then models would have to be altered accordingly.
4. It was mentioned in the discussion that it was preferable to perform analyses from date of diagnosis, but the sample size would be reduced. It would be nice to see these results in any case, even though the confidence intervals would be wide.
5. For those who had progressive disease, was their time since initial diagnosis available? If so, this could be incorporated into the model.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The p-values for stage and prior treatment history in paragraph 3 of the results appear incorrect.
2. In Table 3, Stage at diagnosis has the referent category as Stage II and III. I presume it should be I and II? What was done with missing stage?
3. Other co-variables in the model should be described in Table 3.

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:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests