Reviewer's report

Title: Increased expression of EphA7 correlates with adverse outcome in primary and recurrent glioblastoma multiforme patients

Version: 1 Date: 27 November 2007

Reviewer: Nalin Gupta

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Journal: BMC Cancer
Title: Increased expression of EphA7 correlates with adverse outcome in primary and recurrent glioblastoma multiforme patients
Authors: Wang et al

Confidential comments to editors

The study is well conducted but the experimental plan is basically a correlation with immunohistochemical results with clinical data in a small cohort of patients with no real mechanistic or functional data. The paper would be much stronger if some in vitro experiments were done evaluating the role of EphA7 in human glioma cells. As such, its significance are limited.

Reviewers's report

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors have performed an immunohistochemical study of EphA7 expression in a small cohort of GBM patients. The results from this analysis were correlated with clinical outcomes such as patient survival and recurrence. The only notable positive findings were that EphA7 protein expression showed an inverse correlation with overall survival and that it correlated with MVD. Because the experiments performed were limited, it is unknown whether this is an association between EphA7 and a separation of GBM tumors by any other genetic stratification. While it is possible that a causative link may exist between EphA7 and tumor behavior, an observation such as this is of limited value and does not add much to the literature. The paper would be greatly strengthened by any experiment that demonstrated some functional role or effect of EphA7 in tumor cells, either on growth or interaction with endothelial cells. Although I realize that a mechanistic objective was not one put forth by the authors, some work suggesting the relevance of EphA7 is needed to provide some additional weight to the results.
2. It is unclear why an even smaller group of recurrent GBM tumors were included. These data are of limited value since the group is small and difficult to compare with the primary tumor group. Inclusion of recurrent tumor patients.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Page 7. What is meant by the 'carcinoma components' of the tumor. This is unconventional terminology when referring to GBM tumors.

What next?
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- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest
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- An article of limited interest

Quality of written English
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- Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests
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I declare that I have no competing interests.