Reviewer's report

Title: Loss of heterozygosity at thymidylate synthase locus in Barrett's metaplasia, dysplasia, and carcinoma sequences

Version: 3 Date: 20 March 2009

Reviewer: Tom G Paulson

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The manuscript by Kuramochi, et al., has addressed most of the major issues brought up after the previous submission. The additional information in the tables and in the methods make it possible to follow how the experiments were performed. The quality of the written English has improved as well.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. A study published recently by this group (Kuramochi, et al 2008, Int J Onc 32: 201-208, 2008), examined a related question (TS polymorphisms and response to 5FU therapy in EA patients). While the purposes of the two studies differ, it seems likely that there is some overlap in the EA patients examined in the two studies. Were any of the patients in the current study also part of the 2008 study? If so, the authors should indicate in the methods how many of the patients had their TS genotype and/or LOH data previously reported.

Discretionary Revision

1. There is a disconnect with the manner in which the authors describe the association between the TS genotype and mRNA levels in the introduction vs. the discussion, with the introduction suggesting a strong association between genotype and mRNA levels and the discussion stating there is still much controversy over this topic. Since the authors previous publications indicate that TS genotype and mRNA levels are not usually associated, they may want to indicate this is an undecided topic in the introduction.

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