Reviewer's report

Title: Mammaglobin B expression is an independent prognostic marker for reduced risk of recurrence in epithelial ovarian cancer

Version: 2 Date: 9 June 2009

Reviewer: Menelaos Zafrakas

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New Title: Mammaglobin B expression is an independent prognostic marker for reduced risk of recurrence in epithelial ovarian cancer

Former Title: Prognostic significance of human Mammaglobin B expression in epithelial ovarian cancer

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General Comments
1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes
3. Are the data sound? Yes
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes, appropriate changes have been made.
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes, appropriate changes have been made.
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? No, there is still a minor problem with the title; the abstract is OK (see comment 1 under Major Compulsory Revisions).
9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes

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

1. In response to one of the reviewers’ comments the authors state in their response letter that they have changed the title to “Mammaglobin B is an
independent prognostic marker for reduced risk of recurrence in epithelial ovarian cancer”. However, in the revised article the new title is slightly different, i.e. “Mammaglobin B expression is an independent prognostic marker for reduced risk of recurrence in epithelial ovarian cancer” (the word “expression” has been added). Still, both titles are not so accurate: “Mammaglobin B”, not its expression, is a prognostic marker; “Mammaglobin B expression”, not merely “Mammaglobin B” is associated with “reduced risk of recurrence”.

Thus, the authors may just delete some words from the new title, i.e. the words “…for reduced risk of recurrence…”, and change the title to “Mammaglobin B is an independent prognostic marker in epithelial ovarian cancer”. Alternatively, the authors may add a second sentence providing more information about the prognostic role of mammaglobin B, for example “Mammaglobin B is an independent prognostic marker in epithelial ovarian cancer and its expression is associated with reduced risk of disease recurrence” or “Mammaglobin B is an independent prognostic marker in epithelial ovarian cancer and its expression is associated with a favourable outcome” etc.

2. In the last line of page 19 the authors state “…expression of the Mammaglobin B homologous [i.e., Mammaglobin A (MGB-1)]…”. Given that other members of the secretoglobin family and the uteroglobin superfamily are also homologous to mammaglobin B, it would be better to rephrase (e.g. “… expression of Mammaglobin 1, which is highly homologous to mammaglobin 2…”

3. In response to one of the reviewers’ comments, the authors have now added two subheadings in the “Discussion” section. The reviewer’s comment suggested that “Discussion” should be divided into paragraphs; there was no suggestion to use subheadings. Now the problem is that after the second subheading, namely “MGB-2 effect on survival prediction”, the authors discuss in part irrelevant issues, i.e. the limitations of using PCR in everyday practice and the possible biological role of mammaglobin 2. The authors should either add two more relevant subheadings respectively or preferably delete the two already existing subheadings from the “Discussion”.

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

None

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Page 3, line 3: Please change “genomic-wide” to “genome-wide”.
2. Page 4, lines 11-12: Please change “the third most common female neoplasm” to “the third most common malignancy of the female genital tract” (the third most common malignancy in females in the USA is colo-rectal carcinoma).
3. Page 4, lines 22-23: Please change the statement “…tumor biology that is deeply complex and currently ignored by conventional chemotherapy.” Tumor biology of ovarian cancer and cancer in general is indeed complex; on the other
hand, conventional chemotherapy is primarily directed against dividing cells and this biological characteristic of tumor cells is not being “ignored”. Please rephrase accordingly.

4. Page 7, last line: Please change “Papanicolau” to “Papanicolaou”.

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: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests: I declare that I have no competing inte

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**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests