Reviewer's report

**Title:** Distribution of immune cells in head and neck cancer: CD8+ T-cells and CD20+ B-cells in metastatic lymph nodes are associated with favourable outcome in patients with oro- and hypopharyngeal carcinoma

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 16 December 2008

**Reviewer:** Cécile Badoual

**Reviewer's report:**

- This article study the B and T cells population in oro and hypopharyngeal tumor and in metastatic lymph nodes using immunochemistry. The authors show that CD8+ infiltration is lower in metastatic lymph nodes than in non metastatic lymph nodes, what about the infiltration in primary tumor site comparing to the non metastatic lymph node? For the CD20+ tumoral infiltration the comparison with the non metastatic lymph node is also necessary.

- The oropharyngeal carcinoma are often associated with an HPV infection. Is it possible to have the statute of the potential infection in line to explain the T and B cells infiltration.

- The cytotoxic CD8 T cells infiltration is associated with a good prognosis, how the author’s explain this result with the absence of correlation with the granzyme B infiltration. A staining with the other cytotoxic markers (TiA1 and perforin ) could be useful.

**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' below