Reviewer’s report

Title: Expressions of HIF-1alpha and VEGF in colorectal cancer: correlations with clinical outcomes and prognostic implications

Version: 2 Date: 9 April 2009

Reviewer: devrim cabuk

Reviewer’s report:

This is a retrospective study investigating the role of HIF 1 alpha and VEGF in colorectal cancer. HIF 1 alpha is an essential factor inducing cancer angiogenesis. There are limited number of studies investigating the prognostic role of these factors in solid tumors. But the number of patients in this study is small. There are limited number of patients in all stages. We already have an approved drug in metastatic colorectal cancer targeting VEGF. None of these patients received this agent.

Minor essential revisions: 1. There are some linguistic and grammatical errors that should be corrected.
2. Immunohistochemical staining and scoring system is not well defined, especially for HIF-1 alpha.
3. Tables should also include %-values in addition to total number of patients.
4. Figures: Immunohistochemistry pictures should also contain a positive control as reported by Zhang et al.
5. The discussion and conclusions are not well balanced. The discussion part is quite redundant. It's too long and only defining the results of other trials, but there is little comment about the results of this study.

Major compulsory revisions: Major criticism is the lack of novelty. The study does not appear novel enough for publication in its current form, requiring additional analysis and extensive revision. It is not clear to this reviewer what the conclusion of this study would be, as other reports have already been published on this topic. Authors need to emphasize the significance of their study compared to already published reports. We already have many published studies proving the effectiveness of agents targeting VEGF. Some of these targeting agents are already approved and used in standard treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.