Reviewer's report

Title: Self-renewal and chemotherapy resistance of p75NTR positive cells in esophageal squamous cell carcinomas

Version: 1 Date: 7 March 2008

Reviewer: Maria Grazia Daidone

Reviewer's report:

This paper is focused on a very popular and up-to-date topic, that is the possibility to isolate putative cancer stem cells from human tumors. The Authors applied different approaches to investigate the relationship between p75 expression and stemness in esophageal squamous cell carcinomas, and to characterize p75-positive cells compared to the other cells subpopulations, unsorted or p75-negative.

Major compulsory revision

However, as a gold standard for the identification of putative stem cells, the Authors did not provide any information about the in vivo growth advantage of cells expressing p75 compared to those unsorted and/or not expressing the putative stem cell marker.

Discretionary revision

In addition, in consideration of the large number of patients with esophageal squamous cell carcinomas in which p75 expression has been evaluated, some information on the prognostic role of this putative stemness marker could have been provided.

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

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests