Reviewer's report

Title: p21 gene codon 31 polymorphism is not associated with primary open angle glaucoma in Caucasians

Version: 1  Date: 14 February 2005

Reviewer: Marcela Votruba

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General
Marcela Votruba
13/02/2005.
BioMedCentral.

Ressiniotis et al.
P21 gene codon 31 polymorphism is not associated with primary open angle glaucoma in Caucasians.

This is a clear, well written, succinct and direct paper dealing with a well formulated question and providing a valid contribution to the literature. I see no significant problems with the style, presentation, or content. I would suggest that it may be accepted with minor revision.

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

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

The authors have studied the role of the p21 codon 31 polymorphism previously reported as being involved in apoptosis in a Chinese cohort of patients with glaucomatous optic neuropathy. They have sought to undertake a similar study to that carried out by the Chinese group in order to see if there is any association between p21 codon 31 polymorphism and glaucomatous optic neuropathy in a European population. They have carried out a relatively simple study. They have used 140 POAG patients and 73 healthy individuals as controls. They have not found any association between the p21 codon 31 polymorphism and POAG. As with all such studies, the control group is of great interest, since the outcome of such a study may be confounded by the selection of these individuals. The authors chose individuals with normal IOP, visual fields and optic discs: but they do not say if these individuals had any other eye disease, or if they were relatives of the controls of spouses. Such information may be pertinent. The POAG patient group was well defined: with IOP below 30 mmHg. Was this on or off treatment?

In comparing their results to those of the Chinese paper the authors might included a comparison of the numbers studied in the Chinese study versus the current report, in order to give readers an idea of the statistical background.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
The authors conclude that they cannot exclude the possibility of p21 being associated with POAG in other ethnic groups and that further association studies should be performed. It seems that the possibility that polymorphisms in p21 other than codon 31 could easily be explored in their population, which is something that they have not done: perhaps they could comment on whether this is a worthwhile future strategy in the discussion.

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that i have no competing interests