Reviewer's report

Title: Predicting Smear Negative Pulmonary Tuberculosis with Classification Trees and Logistic Regression: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 28 October 2005

Reviewer: Pierre Tattevin

Reviewer's report:

General

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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)
1. smoking seems to be negatively associated with the diagnosis of SNPT in table 1 (p<0.01). However, the authors did not even mention this interesting point in the result section, neither did they comment on this in the discussion. This may be related to the wide range of differential diagnosis in heavy smoker presenting with lung illness, but this has to be developed.
2. page 3, last line : the term Human Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome doesn't need to be detailed (AIDS is now universally accepted as an abbreviation)
3. page 7, last paragraph : "...negatively associated with SNPT..." instead of "...negatively associatec SNPT..."
4. table 3, last line, there is a mistake : the authors probably mean CART(validation sample), and not CART (original sample)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests