Reviewer's report

Title: Early decrements in bone density after completion of neoadjuvant chemotherapy in pediatric bone sarcoma patients

Version: 2 Date: 31 July 2010

Reviewer: Inas Thomas

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Major Compulsory Revisions
1. I commend the authors for using volumetric BMD since the children were still growing. However, the age range was wide and included study members in various stages of puberty. Since peak bone mass is accrued during puberty, could the low BMD that was found be complicated by lack of puberty, either due to age or delayed maturation? I agree that serial screens may help identify those at risk in a timely manner, but the change in BMD may be hard to interpret with pubertal changes.

2. I recommend expanding the demographics table to define by age group, gender and weight status who had low BMD. The study patients had a low Z-score for BMI (mean -1.03). Was this significant in those with decreased BMD?

3. When were the scans done in comparison to when the neoadjuvant therapy was completed? Under Methods in Assessment of Bone Mineral Density, in the 3rd paragraph, you stated that BMD was measured perioperatively on completion of neoadjuvant chemotherapy and before continuing adjuvant chemotherapy. Was that only for the calcaneal BMD or for all?

4. What were the standards used to determine low BMD in the calcaneal DXA measurements?

Minor Essential Revisions
None.

Discretionary Revisions
1. Were other causes of decreased BMD such as endocrinopathies evaluated?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.