Reviewer's report

Title: Elevated CRP values predict nodal metastasis in patients with penile cancer

Version: 2 Date: 15 April 2013

Reviewer: Chris Protzel

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

- The authors report a study including 94 Patients. Only 79 patients had a preoperative CRP. Therefore 15 patients have to be excluded from the study. The next exclusion factor is the lymphadenectomy. Only 76 patients recieved a lymphadenectomy. Therefore at least another 3 patients have to be excluded from the study. It is not clear how many patients had Tcis or Ta tumor, but at least 14 patients from table 1 have to be excluded, since these tumors have no risk of metastases. Therefore the complete manuscript has to be re-written with the exact data.

- The authors have to discuss the fact, that advanced tumors often bear superinfection followed by a CRP increase. Since advanced tumors are associated with a higher risk of metastases there might be a bias.

Minor Essential Revisions

- The introduction is to long.

- The term "high volume center" in the abstract is surprising for 47 penile cancer patients in 20 years.

- The median follow up of 28 month is also surprising for a 20 year period.

- The insurance status does not belong into the results and an association with the N status is not reasonable (table1).

- The authors have to explain why so many patients with Tcis and pTa underwent partial penectomy.

- The part of study limitations in the discussion has to be re-written. The fact of missing follow up and missing lymphadenectomy has to be discussed. The sentence "Number of cases is still rather impressive" is completely not scientific and has to be deleted!

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.