Reviewer's report

Title: Screening and detection of human papillomavirus (HPV) high-risk strains HPV16 and HPV18 in saliva samples from subjects under 18 years old in Nevada: a pilot study.

Version: 3 Date: 14 August 2012

Reviewer: Ruth Tachezy

Reviewer's report:

Title: Screening and detection of human papillomavirus (HPV) high-risk strains HPV16 and HPV18 in healthy pediatric patient saliva samples from Nevada: a pilot study.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background
The background is focused on information about HPV and cervical and head and neck cancer. Since the prevalence of HPV in healthy children was studied, entirely different information should be included in the introduction, etc. prevalence of HPV in young people and adults, comparison of the age specific prevalence, differences caused by different methods used.

The authors introduced changes into the discussion but still the background is the same, including the sentence “and malignancy process of nearly all cervical adenocarcinomas...“. And how about squamose carcinomas. I suggest to entirely rewriting the introduction.

Page 3: The higher prevalence of high-risk HPV strains in pre-cancerous and cancerous oropharyngeal tumors suggests that HPV may preferentially infect developing or established cancers, thereby modulating carcinogenic progression and ultimately influencing patient outcomes. Do the authors mean that in those? patients with head and neck cancers who get infected by HPV, the prognosis improves? So HPV is not etiological factor of a subset of head and neck cancers? Isn’t HPV the starting point of immortalization and transformation of epithelial cells?

There were no changes made in this part of the background.

Materials and Methods

Please specify in more details the process of sampling.

Even in a retrospective study there must be information available about the process of sampling (solution for oral rinse, volume and etc.).
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests: