Reviewer’s report

Title: Smoking decreases the level of circulating CD34+ progenitor cells in young healthy women - a pilot study

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Reviewer: Michael Fritzenwanger

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The study of Ludwig et al. examines the level of CD34+ progenitor cells in obviously healthy young smoking women compared to non-smoking women. The authors could show in this well done study that smoking decreased the number of CD34+ cells significantly, decreased the number of CD34+/CD133+ progenitor cells and the number of CFU both without reaching significance, indicating that smoking deceases EPC number both in women and men. Furthermore the number of CD34+ cells correlated with FMD. A little disappointing is the small number of women which were examined but this limitation was mentioned by the authors in the title: pilote study and in the limitation section.

Minor Revisions:
1. It should be VEGF receptor 2 (VEGFR2) instead of VEGFR
2. PC should be mentioned
3. The text is not always easy written.
4. The conclusion that the number of CD34+ progenitor cells may be a tool for risk stratification in young smoking women seems very speculative and should be rewritten.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.