Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of Ginkgo biloba on chemically-induced mammary tumors in rats receiving tamoxifen

Version: 2 Date: 4 February 2013

Reviewer: Jin-Rong Zhou

Reviewer's report:

1. Major compulsory revisions

Methods section

Animal and treatment: It is unclear why GbE was administered via ip injection, but not oral administration which is more relevant to human situation; Not including the GbE alone in the experimental groups was also a flaw of design.

Measurement of mammary tumor volume and area: The authors did not provide sufficient details of protocols for determination of tumor areas (live, degenerative and necrotic). Specifically, it is unclear, and this reviewer doubt if the measured areas in the HE slide represent the true proportions of these areas in the tumor. The authors should cite any reference(s) for the equation used to calculate areas, if there is any.

Results section

The authors stated that 10 rats/group were used in the experiment, but the data in Table 1 showed different animal numbers, especially only 5 rats in the control group. The authors should provide explanation why only part of the experimental animals was included in the final results.

Statistical results should be clearly and consistently labeled. The labeling should represent the statistical results of the control vs. the treatment groups, and the TAM alone vs TAM+GbE groups in the figures and table.

The authors defined the live tumors as the TAM-resistant or ER-#-resistant breast tumors, but did not provide any experimental evidence to support it.

2. Minor compulsory revisions

Background section

First paragraph, the first sentence: Although the majority of breast cancers are estrogen-dependent, some are estrogen-independent.

The third paragraph, the first sentence: GbE should be spelled out at the first time (not the abstract), and “AM” should be “CAM”; the second sentence: “than” should be deleted; the last sentence: “GbE” should be used to replace “Ginkgo biloba extract”
Methods section

Immunohistochemical procedures: “anti-R-#” should be “anti-ER-#”

3. Discretionary revisions

Please define i.g. and i.p. at the first time they appeared in the text

Please add AI in abbreviation list and define it at the first time it appears

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.