Reviewer’s report

Title: Anti-tumor effect of Liqi, a Traditional Chinese Medicine prescription, in tumor bearing mice

Version: 2 Date: 27 September 2008

Reviewer: kazumi yagasaki

Reviewer's report:

Major points:
This manuscript describes anti-tumor effect of Liqi and some aspects of its modes of action in vivo using tumor-bearing mice. The aim of study seems somewhat sound. However, effective dose of Liqi is extremely high (25-50 g/kg), indicating Liqi should be ingested as food. Authors do not refer to toxicity of such high dose of Liqi. Furthermore, Liqi contains many kinds of components so that effective chemical entity cannot be identified because of diverse effects by diverse components. Authors should indicate that TNF-alpha possesses cytotoxicity against Sarcoma 180, and add evidence that Liqi can enhance TNF production in tumor infiltrating macrophages from mice treated with Liqi. Anyhow, the major problem with this manuscript is high effective dose of Liqi.

Minor points:
1) There are many inconsistencies in wording, for instance, antitumor and anti-tumor, C57BL, C57BL and C57BL/6, China and P. R. China, and so on.
2) Page 4, lines 5-1 from bottom: ##mice weighing 18-20 g---#. Age of mice should be shown (cf. Ppage 5 line 2). What was the composition of animal diet (food)? Is there any possibility that the diet contained active principles of Liqi?
3) Page 7, lines 13: specific radioactivity (ex. Bq/mmol) of [3H]TdR should be described.
4) Page 9, lines 3-1 from bottom: this sentence is not consistent with results shown in Table 3. A representative histogram of cell cycle analysis should be shown with Table 3.

Others:
There are many typographical errors such as CO2, lack of space such as 0.5mCi and 0.6ng/mL etc.

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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.