Reviewer’s report

Title: SNAI1 Expression: A Rare Event In Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma Associated With Features Of Poor Prognosis

Version: 1 Date: 3 November 2009

Reviewer: Lorenzo Lo Muzio

Reviewer’s report:

SNAI1 Expression: A Rare Event In Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma Associated With Features Of Poor Prognosis

The topic of the paper is interesting and may potentially contribute to the understanding of the oral cancer scenario. Nonetheless, the paper has some minor/major problematic which need to be carefully addressed before it can be considered suitable for publication. In fact, a considerable focus is made on the expression of different molecules, which in some sections, especially in the results, seems to overcome what should be the focus of the paper, according to the title. In addition, relationships among the different reported molecules and SNAI1 expression is not always evident and clear; e.g. “a trend seemed to appear with high FAKc expression… further indicating a link between the kinase and tumor progression. E-cadherin loss (score 2 in >90% area) was associated with a significantly higher proportion of positive nodal status at surgery… E-cadherin loss was not associated with shorter EFS in our cohort”.

Thus, authors are requested to better target and focus on the issue addressed in the title and its relationships with the other molecules.

Here are some other comments for authors use in revising their paper:
- In the Abstract, the Results section should be revised according to the general comment; in particular, lines 49-50 should be removed.
- Lines 92-100: it is not necessary to cite methodological details and the obtained results in this section. Thus, the corresponding lines should be moved in the appropriate section or deleted.
- Lines 178-192: these lines should be moved to the methods section.
- Conclusions should be limited to results of the present study.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'