Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparison of DNA Histograms by Standard Flow Cytometry and Image Cytometry on Sections in Barrett's Adenocarcinoma

Authors:

Qin Huang (Qin.Huang@va.gov)
Chenggong Yu (Chenggong.yu@gmail.com)
Xiaoqi Zhang (zhangxiaqi.nj@gmail.com)
Raj K. Goyal (raj_goyal@hms.harvard.edu)

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Author's response to reviews:

Thanks for the review of revised paper entitled, "Comparison of DNA Histograms by Standard Flow Cytometry and Image Cytometry on Sections in Barrett's Adenocarcinoma".

It is clear that reviewer #1 (Dr Marianne Lorenzato) finds all our responses and changes in this revised paper acceptable. We have corrected the one error.

The reviewer #2 (Dr Alfred Boecking) shows a clear bias against image cytometry on tissue sections. As was apparent in his first review he would like for us to conclude that image cytometry on tissue sections was no good, in spite of our data. His rambling critique focuses on advancing his biased views.

We also wish to point out that this reviewer has not identified any specific issues with the data presented in this paper. Almost all of the reviewer's comments are focused on comparison of image cytometry on sections with image cytometry on dispersed cells. Our paper deals with comparison of flow cytometry and image cytometry on sections. We would like to leave the discussion of image cytometry on sections and dispersed cells for a later study. We welcome Dr Boecking to participate in a blinded controlled comparison of the two techniques, if he so wishes.

In this revision we have removed discussion related to comparison of image cytometry using tissue sections or dispersed cells. We will not respond to the reviewer's rambling general comments; instead we will focus on specific comments on our paper.

Point by point responses to Dr Boecking's specific comments are as follows:

9. Abstract (page 2) "High fidelity image cytometry on sections or dispersed cells" is not a term invented in this report. It has been used in serious scientific publications (cited) to describe recognition of single cells and small peaks. We have retained this description.
10. Introduction (page 4). This reference to image cytometry on dispersed cells has been deleted.

11. Methods (page 7, line 16). The reviewer is confusing performance of older microtome with those of the current ones. No change has been made.

12. Results (page 10, line 8). The word `sharp¿ has been deleted.

13. (page 14, line 8). The improved software identifies each cell is clearly document in this report. This is improvement over our previous experience with older systems (see ref # 18; also see Lorenzato ref #13).

14. (page 14, line 22). The reviewer is correct that head to head comparison of results from sections of 7 µm to 8 µm and dispersed nuclei has not been performed. This would be an interesting topic of further study.

15. The reviewer is correct. We have reworded the sentence.

16-19. We have now deleted discussion related to comparison of image cytometry on dispersed nuclei and tissue sections.

We suspect that these responses may not satisfy Dr Boecking even though reviewer #1 finds this paper acceptable. The Editor may like to invite Dr Boecking to register his opinion and comments on this paper with an opportunity for us to respond. However, we will gladly accept whatever Editorial decision is made. Of course, we will pay the required publication fee when the paper is accepted for publication.

We thank the Editor as well as the two reviewers for their vigorous review of our paper.