Reviewer's report

Title: Septin 9 methylated DNA is a sensitive and specific blood test for colorectal cancer

Version: 1 Date: 27 September 2011

Reviewer: Christian Pilarsky

Reviewer's report:

The authors describe a new version of the methylated SEPT9 and its initial application in a small study. Whereas the performance of test has been improved, the test is still prone to false positives in a screening setting when the results are compared to colonoscopy. The improvement of early detection of CRCs is highly important for treatment of this very common cancer. The article is well written and contains all the needed data to reproduce the test.

However, there are minor points which should revised before publication:
1. The tables 2 and 3 with the individual sample data should be moved in the supplemental data section.
2. Table 1 and figure 1 are nearly redundant and should be combined.
3. Figure 3 can be moved into the supplemental data section since the content is not very informative.
4. There are some typos in the manuscript like on page 9 “nine who had at least one greater than 10 mM” which should be corrected.
5. The exact name of the DNA extraction kit with the order ID should be given, since it is not easy to identify the kit from the providers web site.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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