Reviewer's report

Title: MIA is a potential biomarker for tumor load in neurofibromatosis type 1

Version: 6  Date: 16 February 2011

Reviewer: Bruce R Korf

Reviewer's report:

The authors report an interesting and potentially useful association of MIA with tumor burden in NF1 patients. The paper is for the most part well written and the data well presented. A few suggestions for minor improvements or clarifications follow:

1. Table 1 does not seem essential to include.
2. What was the age range of patients? Were those with smaller tumor burdens generally younger?
3. Could MIA positive and negative cells be distinguished morphologically or by special staining? For example, were positive (or negative) cells Schwann cells?
4. How was "internal tumor" defined? Did this category include plexiform neurofibromas, spinal neurofibromas, internal nodular neurofibromas?
5. Did the number of dermal tumors correlate with number of internal tumors?

The statement at the bottom of page 11 ("Analogically [sic] to its role in melanoma..." is speculative and not supported by data.

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests