Reviewer’s report

Title: Small nucleolar RNAs as new biomarkers in chronic lymphocytic leukemia

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Reviewer: Ulf Klein

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Ronchetti et al. profiled small nucleolar RNAs (snoRNAs) in purified CLL cases as well as in purified normal B-cell subsets. They observed downregulation of a set of snoRNAs in CLL versus normal B cells. Moreover, a correlation was observed between the expression levels of snoRNAs and their host genes, and there was some association between the regulation of expression of pairs of snoRNAs and host genes and the cytogenetically defined subgroups of CLL. A predictive model based on two snoRNAs was generated that reportedly distinguishes two different prognostic groups of early stage CLL and that appears superior for predicting clinical outcome at least in this panel of CLL.

The present work provides a solid characterization of snoRNA expression in a larger, well characterized panel of CLL and in normal B cell subsets, thus establishing a framework of snoRNA expression data in CLL and their normal counterparts that is potentially hypothesis driving. In that regard, the paper is very strong and timely.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.