Author's response to reviews

Title: Remodeling of extracellular matrix by normal and tumor-associated fibroblasts promotes cervical cancer progression

Authors:

Alexandra Fullár (fullarsz@gmail.com)
József Dudás (jozsef.dudas@i-med.ac.at)
Lászlóné Oláh (julcsi@korb1.sote.hu)
Péter Hollósi (phollosi@yahoo.com)
Zoltán Papp (maternity@maternity.hu)
Gábor Sobel (gabor@sobel.hu)
Katalin Karászi (katalin.karaszi@nds.ox.ac.uk)
Sándor Paku (paku@korb1.sote.hu)
Kornélia Baghy (kori@korb1.sote.hu)
Ilona Koivalszky (koval@korb1.sote.hu)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Professor Dafne Solera  
Executive Editor of  
BMC Cancer  

Dear Professor Solera,

We were pleased to read the positive comments of the Reviewers and we are grateful for their useful critics. Please find attached our revised manuscript entitled “Remodeling of extracellular matrix by normal and tumor-associated fibroblasts promotes cervical cancer progression” for consideration of publication. 

As you can see, we performed several improvements in the text and provided exhaustive answers to all questions have been raised. The text has been copyedited by an expert native-English person, as well.

Responses to editor’s comments:

Specifically, the following sentences has been added:

*These cells exhibit a clear epithelial morphology and form nests when grown in monoculture. They are positive for pan-cytokeratin but negative for vimentin. In contrast, fibroblasts are vimentin positive, pan-cytokeratin negative cells displaying spindle-like morphology, with elongated, oval nuclei.*

Correction: on page 7 line 139-142.

. Since a prerequisite for tumor cell survival and growth is the prior lawn formation of fibroblasts, the tumor cells in these cultures were easily distinguishable from other cells owing to the fact that immune cells do not survive cultivation, so they could be excluded. Benign cells, like fibroblasts do not grow on top of each other, this is a characteristic feature of malignant cells. The morphological finding of cells spreading on the fibroblast lawn clearly corresponded to cancer cells by reason of their variable sizes and irregular features, large nuclei, prominent nucleoli, decreased cytoplasm/nucleus ratio all of which are the criteria of malignancy. In addition, vimentin and pan-cytokeratin staining served to differentiate between cell types, corroborating our morphological observations, which imply that the presence of tumor-associated fibroblasts is a fundamental requirement for the growth of tumor cells.

Correction: on page 17-18 line 391-401.

Corrected parts of the manuscript are highlighted in blue colour.

We do hope, that the changes meet your requirements.

Best regards,

Ilona Kovalszky  M.D, Ph.D, D.Sc  
Professor of Pathology