Author’s response to reviews

Title: Impact of uPA/PAI-1 and disseminated cytokeratin-positive cells in breast cancer

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor Anne Menard:

Please find attached our revised manuscript:

“Impact of uPA/PAI-1 and disseminated cytokeratin-positive cells in breast cancer”.

We very much appreciate the efforts of the editor and reviewers spending the time to read and commenting on our manuscript. We performed the requested additional calculation and revised the manuscript completely according to yours and the reviewer’s comments. A point by point answer is provided at the end of this letter.

We hope that our manuscript is now suitable for publication in BMC Cancer.

Sincerely
Bruno Märkl, M.D.

Point-by-point answer

Editor Comments:

1 - For all research involving human subjects, informed consent to participate in the study should be obtained from participants (or their parent or guardian in the case of children under 16) and a statement to this effect should appear in the ‘Ethics approval and consent to participate’ section of the Declarations including whether the consent was written. When reporting on such studies, individual patient data should not be made available unless consent for publication has also been obtained. If the need for informed consent has been waived by an IRB or is deemed unnecessary according to national regulations, please clearly state this with details, including the name of the Board or a reference to the relevant legislation in the ‘Ethics approval and consent to participate’ section of the Declarations.

Answer:

Page 12: Ethics approval and consent to participate

..All patients provided written and informed consent for the intraoperative bone marrow biopsy. An additional consent for the retrospective analyses of the data is deemed unnecessary due to the regional law (Bayerisches Krankenhaustgesetz (BayKrG) in der Fassung der Bekanntmachung vom 28. März 2007 (GVBl. S. 288, BayRS 2126-8-G) Art.27 Abs4).

2 - Please include details of how the data used in the study may be accessed by other researchers by including a URL.

Answer: We stored the data at:

https://figshare.com/articles/uPA_PAII_dTC_Maerkl2019_openData_xlsx/8285651

3 - Figures should be numbered in the order they are first mentioned in the text, and uploaded in this order. Multi-panel figures (those with parts a, b, c, d etc.) should be submitted as a single composite file that contains all parts of the figure.

Answer: We already followed this rule. All figures are numbered in the order they appear in the text. Composite figures are provided as single composite file
Reviewer reports:

Serenella Eppenberger-Castori, Ph.D. (Reviewer 1):

1. The authors have now addressed all limitations of the study including the missing possibility to perform some suggested experiments or to enlarge the overall collective.

The sentence regarding the significance of figure 2 B is written in a undirect manner that doesn't clearly explain that the survival curve of the triple positive is not significantly different from the one of the double positive. This should be further clarify in the text.

Answer: The authors thank to Dr. Eppenberger-Castori for this recommendation. We clarified that on Page 7:

All other combinations, especially the comparison between double and triple positive cases were not significant.

2. The legend of this figure now contains "Zellen" (in German) instead of indicating dCK+. This minor correction should also be intergated.

Answer: We corrected this error and provide a updated figure.

Galatea Kallergi, PhD (Reviewer 2): The revised version of the manuscript entitled "Impact of uPA/PAI-1 and disseminated cytokeratin-positive cells in breast cancer" by Bruno Markl et al is improved compared to the previous version and I believe although they didn't performed new experiments due to the biological material limitations, it could be accepted for publication in BMC, because they have addressed the rest of the comments.

Answer: The authors are thankful to Dr. Galatea Kallergi!