Reviewer’s report

Title: Elevated serum OX40L is a biomarker for identifying corticosteroid resistance in pediatric asthma patients

Version: 0 Date: 06 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Kirsten Kloepfer

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting look at utilizing serum OX40L to determine if it can be used as a biomarker for corticosteroid resistance. I have a few questions/comments about this article.

1. A native English speaker should proofread the paper. There are numerous grammatical errors.

3. Consider making your hypothesis stronger. Instead of stating that it "may be associated" you may want to chose a side and state that “it will be associated” or “it won't be associated.”

4. Choose one way to refer to study subjects and use it throughout the manuscript. For example, use "subjects, patients, or participants."

5. Page 5 line 46 reads, "all patients received inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) therapy," but this includes the healthy age-matched control patients. Did everyone receive ICS or only those in the asthma group?

6. How did you chose 10% improvement within one week as a marker of steroid sensitivity? Is this based on previous studies in the literature?

7. I have seen definitions for steroid sensitivity in the literature with a definition based on response to oral corticosteroids for 7 days rather than ICS/LABA for 7 days. Please site your reference(s) for your methods.

8. Table 1: Unable to determine difference between * and #. Consider including cell counts in absolute numbers, particularly the absolute eosinophil count.

9. Page 9, lines 32 states, "patients with high OX40L required higher doses of corticosteroids for the initial ICS response." I did not see this reported in the results.

10. Page 9, line 56-page 10 line 12. I do not understand how these sentences about IL-6 support one another.

11. Page 10, line 10. "Therefore our results indicated an obvious..." This is an overstatement. You may consider replacing it with, "our results suggest/support OX40L..."
12. Page 11 lines 5-7: "Moreover steroid can be combined...." Does this already exist? or are you suggesting this as a next step in your research?

13. Page 11 line 29: "The limitations of the present study are incomplete data..." What data is incomplete?

14. You may consider expanding your strengths and limitations paragraph.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?
3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.