Author's response to reviews

Title: Expression of a-Tocopherol-Associated protein (TAP) Is Associated With Clinical Outcome in Breast Cancer Patients

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Dear Editor:

I am pleased to submit a revised “Expression of a-Tocopherol-Associated Protein (TAP) is associated with clinical outcome in breast cancer patients" by Xi Wang et al. for consideration for publication in *BMC Cancer*. As requested, we have added email addresses for all authors to the title page and an acknowledgements section.

Our previous studies have shown that TAP, a vitamin E binding protein, is differentially expressed among breast carcinomas and may act as a tumor suppressor-like protein in vitamin E dependent and independent manners. In the study presented in this manuscript we find that TAP expression was associated with decreased tumor recurrence and improved 5-year survival in breast cancer. Exploratory analysis showed that this association was strongest in patients with node-positive tumors and was independent of stage and treatment with chemotherapy.

Our results suggest TAP may serve as a useful biomarker for the stratification of breast cancer populations, especially in studies assessing roles for vitamin E in cancer prevention and progression. Vitamin E has been shown to have potential utility for the prevention and treatment of breast cancer, however inconstancies between studies have prevented the discernment of any clear recommendations for its use. TAP may also serve as a prognostic marker in cancer patients, especially in those patients with ER+ breast cancer. We believe our findings would appeal to a broad audience; the question addressed here is of interest to both clinicians and researchers. Thank you for considering our work and please let me know if you need any additional information.

Xi Wang