Reviewer’s report

Title: Tissue metabolite of type I collagen, C1M, and CRP predicts structural progression of rheumatoid arthritis

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Reviewer: Mohammed Sharif

Reviewer's report:

Bay-Jensen et al investigated the relationship between serum concentrations of two relatively new biomarkers (C1M and C3M) to radiographic progression in rheumatoid arthritis using two established biomarkers (CRP and RF) as reference markers. The study is well designed and for most part the manuscript is well written, and the data presented clearly. However, the manuscript lacks clarity in some places and there are some typing errors.

Lines 12-22 in page 7, the authors indicate that biomarkers were measured in all patients of the placebo arm but later (page 11, lines 17-30) suggest that biomarkers were measure at baseline in escape and non-escape sub-groups. A simple flow chart is required to clearly show patient sub-groups, their origin and which biomarkers are being measured. This is an important manuscript as there is a lot of interest in identifying biomarkers that can be used for targeting treatments and enrichment of patient cohorts for clinical trials of potential new drugs. Accordingly, providing clarity for patients' sub-groups, data collection and analysis is very important.

Please correct the typing errors in page 8, lines 9 and 23/24; page 13, line 25, add "phase" after "acute". Also, it would be useful to have a brief description in the method section of how C1M and CRP was combined to check their additive effect for predicting progression.

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

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None

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