Reviewer's report

Title: Glutathione S-transferase pi expression is down-regulated in patients with esophageal squamous carcinoma

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Reviewer: Boon-Huat Bay

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This is an interesting clinical study using immunohistochemical GST-pi staining to correlate with clinico-pathological parameters in 153 cases of esophageal squamous carcinoma from the Anyang Tumor Hospital, Henan, China. The authors observed down-regulation of GST pi expression in esophageal squamous carcinomas, and found that lack of GST-pi protein expression is significantly associated with poorer overall survival. The paper is generally well written and the methodology is sound.

However, the novelty is lost as there has also been a recent report by Huang JX, Li FY, Xiao W, Song ZX, Qian RY, Chen P, Salminen E. entitled "Expression of thymidylate synthase and glutathione-s-transferase pi in patients with esophageal squamous cell carcinoma" (World J Gastroenterol. 2009 Sep 14;15(34):4316-21). In this study, GST-pi expression was correlated with sex, age and clinic-pathological variables such as tumor size, lymph node metastasis, depth of invasion, tumor stage and histological subtype in 102 Chinese patients from the People’s Hospital of Taizhou, China.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. In view of the recent published report, the authors could still justify publication by performing additional in vitro studies such as comparing the expression of GST-pi in esophageal squamous cancer cell lines of different aggressiveness to add new data to their report.

2. It would also be good to include more recent references in the discussion.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests